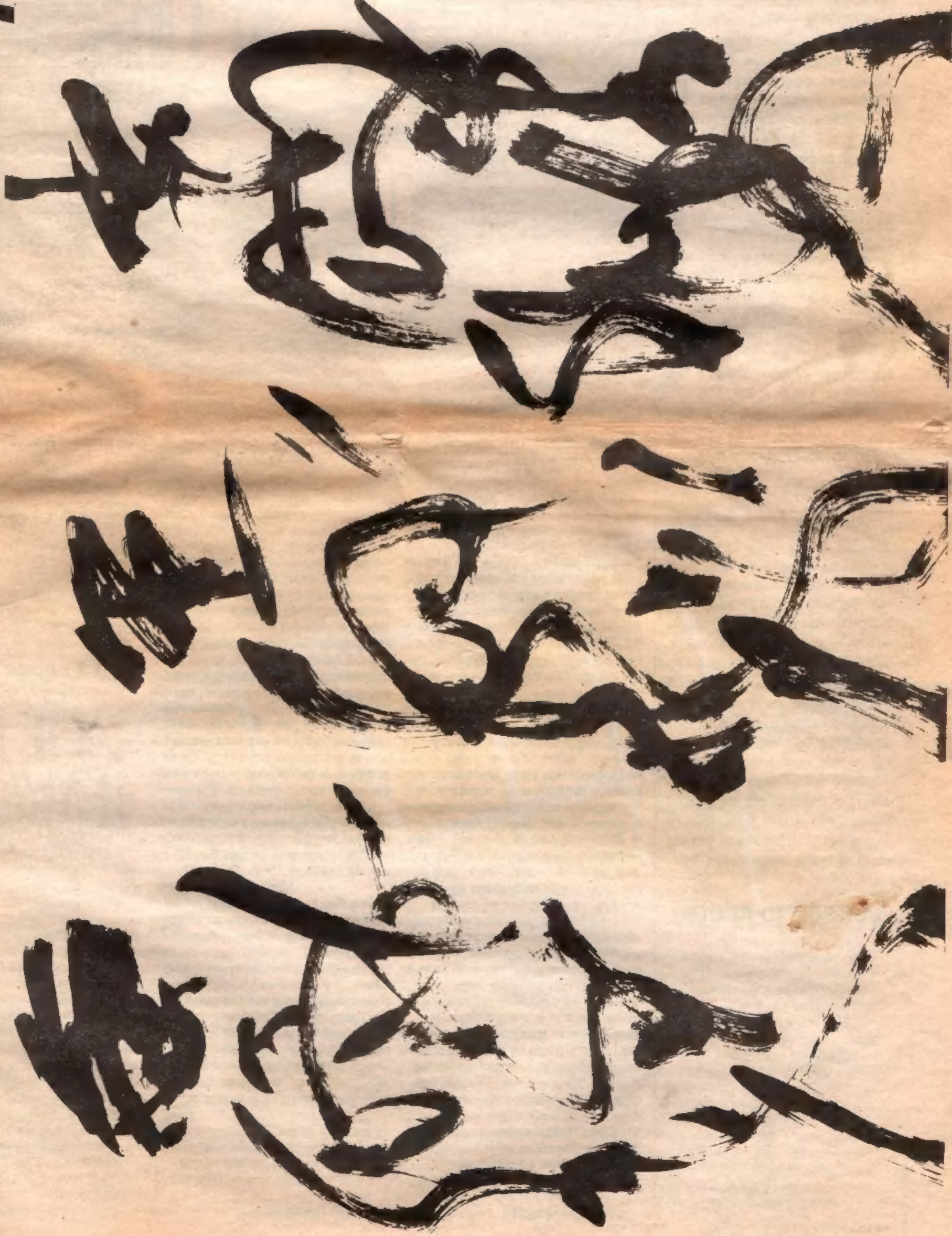


# KICK IT OVER<sup>®</sup>

Cover by (Albert) Ka-Hing Liu



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No. 24 Summer 1989



*G. Schilke*  
Gail A. Schilke

## Many Smokes Rising

An Interview with Chief Jake Swamp, Mohawk Nation at Akwesasne

by Brian Wiles-Heape

**BW-H:** What does the Traditional Council mean to you?

**JAKE:** The council that we are on is called the Traditional Council. Here in our community we have three councils: one that is imposed by New York State and one that is imposed by Canada. Our Traditional Council goes back in history perhaps a thousand years, and we have a constitution called the *Great Law of Peace*. This Great Law was given to our people, and we still function as a government under those principles.

I've been sitting on this Council for perhaps 19 years or so, and the principles we follow are ones that are always based on peace, and also future projections. It was told to us that, a thousand years ago, a great warfare was happening amongst our [Iroquois] peoples, and then a *Peacemaker* was sent amongst our people to try and bring peace to these warring peoples again. At that time there were Five Nations: the Mohawks, the Oneidas, the Onondagas, the Cayugas, and the Senecas. Because these peoples were fighting amongst themselves for so long, they were almost at the point where they were facing ruin and destruction. It got to the point where, I guess, it was so negative that life didn't have anymore meaning to the people.

And so a *Peacemaker* was born on the north side of Lake Ontario (as we know it today). When he grew up, he announced to his people that it was now time for him to

go across the water towards the rising sun, where the human beings live who are fighting each other all the time with so much bloodshed.

So his message was to bring peace, to set up a government system where the spiritual teachings and the daily decisions of those who make decisions would be combined. And where that shows up is in one of the most sacred laws that we have, that when we are in Council deliberating on important things, we are instructed to always project our minds into the future — up to the Seventh Generation to come. So it is that whenever we make a decision, it must be beneficial to ourselves, as well as the future grandchildren. That is our Sacred Law.

Now the women have a very special place in our society. We call the women our leaders. Behind each [Traditional] Chief here — we have nine Chiefs — stands a Clan Mother, who represents the Clan family. Ours is a matriarchal society, and so the woman has a lot of power. She is the one that chooses the leadership. We are told that the reason behind this is because the women are the ones who bring children into the world. And so, they are the producers of life, and are the ones who guide the children as they grow. For these reasons the women choose our Chiefs.

Our leaders [traditional Chiefs], they do not go out and campaign for any position. In fact, if anybody were caught doing this — campaigning for any position in our council — it would automatically dis-

qualify him. It is the Mothers of the Nation that choose the leadership, because it's they who watch the children as they grow. They're the ones who know their mannerisms and qualities, how they're gonna be as leaders: you know, how humble they are, how they act within society. So it's the qualities that they find in the candidates for leadership that make them become a Chief.

But, coming back to the issue of the day: in these modern times many things have changed from the old time. The only thing that doesn't change is our natural environment. We still look at it in the same way as our Grandfathers knew it then.

Whenever we gather for a meeting or ceremony, the first thing that happens is that one person is chosen to stand up and give a Thanksgiving Address or Greeting. And the people who are assembled are instructed to think as one, when it comes to our environment. The person who offers the Thanksgiving Greeting takes each area of our natural environment, and gives it thanks that it still continues its duty and function within the whole. We see ourselves as part of the whole Creation, and so we must be thankful to the whole. If we pull ourselves away, then we are wrong. So now we can see all around what is happening — around the globe. Many of the peoples of the world have lost their vision, their original instructions that came from previous times, when the world was new.

And today, therefore, we see that we as a people are obligated and instructed — it is our responsibility — to go out to the

world and share our knowledge, because the knowledge of our people is still intact from the beginning of time.

And we are going out and sharing that with other peoples of the world. And now certain groups are arising, who are talking about peace, talking about the environment. "Mother Earth" — you hear that all over now. So I think it's very important that we do this. And it's very important that more and more people get involved, because this is a real serious issue — especially where the water is involved, where the air is involved.

We know these things because, maybe 200 years ago, we were given some prophecies that have already fulfilled themselves and are fulfilling themselves today.

Some of these are talking about the water. It was said [200 years ago]: there will come a time when your grandchildren will see that the waters have become dirtied and muddied, and the fish will die off and you will see them floating down the river.

Now, at this time it doesn't mean you should just roll over and wait for these things to happen. It's like these are warnings; we take the prophecies as warnings of things to occur in the future. When you start seeing these things occur then you must do something about it, to try to correct it. That's the way I view it.

And so these things are happening right now. Especially when you see the environmental problems we face right here in Ak-

wesasne. We are told we can only eat fish once a week out of the St. Lawrence River. Now that's a real good sign right there for the fulfillment of the prophecies.

Now the other thing is the air. They said: One day in the future your grandchildren will go outside and look towards the sun, and something will be blocking the vision of the sun, and this will be caused by many smokes rising all over, and it will become dark and the air will be heavy and hard to breathe, and there will be much sickness.

Well, if you go outside here at this radio station [CKON-FM 97.3, the station that serves the reserve, and is licensed not by the Canadian CRTC or the American FCC, but by the Mohawk Nation], you can smell the air coming from the Reynolds Aluminum plant across the river here; it gets in your windpipe and stays there for hours until you can get away from this area. Our people, we breathe this every day. We've become used to it, but it's another warning.

And then there's the part where it talks about the trees in the world. They said: One day your grandchildren will look around and see that now the trees are starting to die from the tops down.

And, as we look around this area, a lot of the elm trees are dying off, and a lot of the maple trees are starting to die off. Some pines are also dying off. This can be corrected, but there's a lot of acid rain happening all over. Now they [industries responsible for pollution] could be given stricter guidelines to follow in order to produce whatever they have to produce, but they should be monitored more closely and have to spend more money.

It seems like they are not willing to spend any money to clean up the environment, as much as they would like to spend money to promote war and build weaponry. It seems like the whole world spends two million dollars a minute on producing more arms and ammunition to destroy each other.

In these areas of concern, we need the people to come out and voice their opinions about the future, about the grandchildren. I think that people should start to listen -- listen to those grandchildren that are not here yet. What are they going to say about us, if we don't do something about it today? That's what I worry about. I have three grandchildren now. But if I don't go out and do something to try to rectify the wrongs that I've been involved with, then I would be guilty along with the rest.

And so, we must all work together -- all peoples, all of humankind, no matter where they come from or what colour they are. We have to brush aside that stuff about the colour of your skin, 'cause the heart is one, and the mind goes together with the heart.

Somewhere in our past history, somebody came up with the idea of controlling the world by dividing the people. The only thing different about people is the areas that they come from -- they are native to certain areas. Like our people were placed on this continent here, so we have a very sacred vision and a respect towards it, and that's why it's our responsibility to take care of it.

So today we have publications like *Akwesasne Notes* and *Indian Time*. We have the radio station here, CKON. And what we promote is our culture, our worldview, and the sharing of that with other people.

But also in what we survive with today,

there's a lot of areas we get involved with. For instance, our men are ironworkers, and they travel all over the continent doing iron work. Now, sometimes they are called to go work in a nuclear power plant. But since we have begun to learn about the nuclear development, a lot of our men will refuse to go to work there -- on the principles they were raised with. They need to survive. But we are glad to see that, among many Mohawks, the principles are first -- before profits. And I believe that our people still have that.

**BW-H:** In the past 19 years you've been a Traditional Chief, you've obviously seen a lot. Would you say that today there's a wider audience for these ideas, that the things you're saying are starting to be heard in a meaningful way? Is there still hope for us?

**JAKE:** Oh yeah! Maybe 300% since then. I became involved prior to the International Bridge blockade in 1986, and I was one of those who were carted off to jail for a few days that time. But it kinda awakened our spirits at that time, because we felt like, "Hey, we're able to stand up and demand our rights!" And it really made us feel good, that we did that. It also reawakened other Indian groups across the continent, and today we're all linked together in a network, by computers or whatever you got.

And we're not only working with other Indian nations and groups, we're working with the rest of the world, too. We've made presentations at the United Nations in Geneva and New York City.

We went to Kansas three or four weeks ago, where there was a gathering called "Countdown 2000". They asked me to open this gathering that they had. This group is headed by Dr. Robert Muller, former Assistant Secretary General to the

world peace. The aim is to have global peace by the year 2000.

Now, a couple of years ago, what we wanted to do was introduce a one-day cease-fire for the whole world. We never got it together to really present that; but what happened is that the Pope picked up on it. But it didn't work for him, because -- I don't know -- but because he belongs to the Catholic Church, and I guess people have religious conflicts all over the world, and so they'll never listen to him.

But I think we can be more successful as Native people because we're kinda looked at as a neutral nation, and we've never gone to other cultures to hurt anybody. And so there's no blood on our hands, and -- you know -- I think people would be more able to listen to us and what we have to say for that reason.

So, in this area of world peace, what I do myself is that I plant trees. They call me "Jake Appleseed." (Laughs) Well, I'm planting Trees of Peace. I've planted maybe a hundred trees across the country. But from that one tree that I plant in a single location, many, many trees are planted afterwards. Like, there's an event coming up in Wisconsin on the ninth of April, and what will happen is that when I do this one ceremony and plant this one tree, it will be symbolic for all the people gathered there. And the U. S. Forest Service has said that afterwards they will pass out a million trees across the state to be planted.

So in that way, it's real beneficial. I'm meeting lots of different people as I travel around, and I heard it said that the scientists are finding out that the green is going to help heal the ozone layer, help heal the Earth. I don't know if it's true, but that's what I hear. So if they won't believe in our prophecies and our spiritualism, they can believe in scientific facts.

there was always the threat hanging over them that they would be arrested for practicing their herbal medicines. A lot of people went to jail for stuff like that.

It was all tied to politics, so our people had to go underground. I remember they used to tell stories that, when they would have their ceremonies in their homes, they would draw the shades down so that nobody could see them. And so, I guess it was in the 1930s when they started re-emerging.

It was around this same time that the *Indian Reorganization Act* in the United States and the *Indian Act* in Canada were coming in. Canada and the United States were working together on their plan of assimilating Indian peoples. And so, our people managed to re-emerge, even though some families were driven away from here because of it and had to live in exile for a few years. But our people were persistent.

And finally today in our community, they have accepted that, "Hey! We have a culture, we have a lot to learn here." And so I was one of those who found himself.

At an early age -- maybe fifteen years old -- I quit school and went out to work. I travelled to Syracuse, New York, because my father had gotten hurt in a car accident coming home from work. He wasn't able to work anymore, and at that time there were nine or ten of us children. That was back in '55. (There's fifteen of us brothers and sisters still living today.)

But somebody had to do something, so my older brother went into the army, and I went to work doing whatever I could find to do in Syracuse, and we sent all the money home. But at that time I also met with other young kids as old as I was, and they were into drinking wine in the alleyways there, and I got involved with



Gail A. Schilke

UN -- he retired last year. All the way through -- when he worked at the UN, he always promoted peace, and he continues that work even though he's not there anymore. Anyway, there are many, many groups taking part in this, and there were 9000 people at the gathering. That morning when we gathered at Kansas City, 500,000,000 people around the world, all at the same time, were doing their own thing for

**BW-H:** Was all this given to you by your elders, or did you have to rediscover it on your own?

**JAKE:** No, it was taken away from me and my parents for a whole long time. Our [Longhouse] people were underground for about a hundred and fifty years, especially in this area, and they were suppressed by the missionaries. Our people kept our culture alive underground, and

them. (Laughs) And so I got a lot of education there in them alleyways, too. (Laughs)

But at the time, it seems now like I was walking around the world not knowing who I was. There was always some element missing from my life. I had a religious upbringing -- Catholic, you know. But this never seemed to satisfy me fully -- there was always something missing about life that I couldn't put my finger

continued on page 4



(Albert) Ka-Hing Liu

**"After Seven O'Clock Count Tonight  
Females May Use the Yard Until Nine PM"**

Here in these northern flatlands,  
I raise my collar against the night wind  
and walk purposefully  
in large circles.

The fence -- chainlink with six barbed strands above --  
is always at my right shoulder.  
It quivers only slightly in the wind.  
Steady companion of my rounds,  
it murmurs encouragements to me --  
Aeolian whisperings from a barbwire harp.

Tonight I long to lean upon it,  
hook my fingers into the links,  
lay my cheek against cold wire,  
and feel the wind bathe me  
as it pours through.

But the lights would reveal me;  
the cameras would report me;  
and loudspeakers would summon me  
to be interrogated.

So I do not linger,  
but stride by,  
foregoing metallic embraces.  
And the wind fondles my hair,  
thrusting it back from my forehead,  
as you used to, darling.

Katya Komisaruk

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We seldom seem to agree on much these days - articles published do not necessarily represent the opinions of the collective.

On a not so happy note, our "striking" appeal wasn't all that much of a success. A special thanks to those of you who did provide support. We are looking at ways of cutting our costs by a quarter. We probably will not be able to continue to provide copies free to all prisoners who request copies -- it is just too expensive. Also Canada may eliminate 2nd class mail. If that is the case we are expecting our postal bill to double. The collective is burnt out and grumpy -- especially me.

Last issue cost \$2000. This issue will hopefully come in at \$1500.

Bye for this issue, Karl.

on. I was always searching for something I didn't know was there.

And finally I met my wife, and she belonged to this family that had kept the culture alive. That's the reason why I came back to that. My wife and I had a lot of arguments, because my upbringing had taught me not to associate with "them pagans over there," because if you go into that Longhouse, you're going straight to hell when you die. (Laughs) And so, coming out of that kind of situation, you know, I had a lot of arguments with my wife, but we survived it. And my wife and me, we got married and we had a few kids.

Then, finally, I learned from my wife about the culture part -- you know, I started to ask questions of my wife about it. And when we got married we made a deal, that I wouldn't complain when she goes to the Longhouse for the ceremonies, and she would not complain about me when I go to church.

Well anyway, one day after church -- I went with my grandfather to church -- and we stopped in for one or two, eh (laughs), and my wife says, "Is that what you're taught in church, when you come out of there, to go tip a few, eh." And that kinda made me feel funny, the way she put it. So anyway, I thought, "Well, if that's the way she feels, then I'm gonna go check out where she goes."

Anyway, about three years after this, I got enough courage to go in the Longhouse, to finally go inside. When I got there, there was a Strawberry ceremony going on. And I reached for the door with kinda some reluctance, because I was afraid. As soon as I got inside, I sat down on the bench they had there. There were a lot of people in there. There was a man -- an old man -- talking.

Well, you know, that day it just all came to me. All that stuff they were talking about -- the Earth and all the elements -- you know, the water, the air -- the way they were describing it, it just went into me and I -- uh -- I just went bananas. And then I wanted to learn so much. I just kept after the old people, I just went back and back. I was a pest. (Laughs)

And then, this old man that's not living anymore, for about three years I'd go visit him, and he'd say, "Well, the weather is pretty good today." And meanwhile, I'm asking a question of him -- a real heavy question -- and all I'm getting is the weather, eh. And then, three years later, he finally says to me -- he starts talking -- he says, "Well, you didn't quit on me, so I'm gonna start telling you stuff." So I had to earn it, eh.

And by that time, I guess, the Clan Mothers were watching. And then one of the older Chiefs was becoming deaf, and couldn't really handle the Council

anymore. What happened was that they asked me to take his place, and when it came time for Council, if he wasn't able to make it, I would sit there in his place and would report back to him what went on and everything like that. And then he got worse, so it ended up that I just sat there permanently.

Then after he died, I was freed up for one day, and I said, "Well, I'm free now, I don't have to go to Council anymore and run around and do all this stuff..." (Laughs)

Well, then about a day later they called a clan meeting and they asked me to sit in again. And I couldn't refuse, you know, because I knew how much work needed to be done. 'Cause when you start learning what's happening, what's going on in the world -- what's really happening, you know. There's a real danger facing the peoples of the Earth. And so we have to really work hard to try to rectify all of the wrongs that we have done to the Earth.

The Earth. It's like our Mother. That's our teaching: the Earth is your Mother. All life forms come from the Mother, just like your own flesh-and-blood mother. That's the way it was put to us.

**BW-H:** Your parents lived on this reserve, didn't they?

**JAKE:** Yeah.

**BW-H:** Did they farm?

**JAKE:** Oh yeah.

You know, back in the early '50s, before the Seaway went through, probably eighty percent of the community here was self-sufficient. We had dairy farms, and I grew up on one. When the Seaway went through, the men abandoned their farms and went to work -- as labourers, as iron-workers, and they made a lot of money, eh. They went for the big money, but it didn't have no future. It only lasted a few years, and by that time they had gotten rid of all their cattle. And they couldn't start all over

anymore.

So there's a lot of obstacles in the way, you know, but we can't even give up. I think it's worldwide -- it's a worldwide problem -- and we can't sit down and cry about it right now.

It's like when you lose a family member that you love -- things will change. When you have a death, this is similar to the environment. When you lose a family member, everything's different. Your vision is blurred because of your tears, and it affects your whole body when you lose somebody.

Well, we have a ceremony of bringing back to reality the people that are affected in this way. We use symbolism. Like, "If you have tears in your eyes, we will go up to the heavens to retrieve the softest skin of the fawn, and we will use this to wipe away the tears. Now the Maker of All Life didn't mean for us to be unhappy on this Earth, so we will request (of the Creator) that, tomorrow morning when the new sun rises, you will go outside with no more tears and will see the world clearly again." So then we go through the whole body like this with the different symbolism we use.

This comes from *Aiionwatha* (or *Hiawatha*) a thousand years ago, when he felt so badly about the loss of his children. And he divorced himself from his people, and he went into the forest because of what had happened to him. He felt so bad -- he was mourning the loss of his daughters. So he left his Nation and was roaming the forest by himself.

That means, when you feel so bad and troubled and you're all by yourself and there's nobody to help you, that's when the words came that he put into the wampum. And he hung up thirteen strings of wampum, and then each time he said, "This is what I would do if I saw somebody in the shape that I am in, to comfort them." This

from the outside. So in the last few years we have really tried to work together -- all the councils here. So right now we're kinda working together on environmental issues, land rights issues, all sorts of issues.

The gambling that has come to our community has affected all our councils. There are individuals who go out and meet up with outside investors, and then as individuals come back in here and try to take on the sovereignty of the whole, and use it for their own personal benefit. And this is what we're not agreeable to.

As the Traditional Council, we don't really accept gambling as a part of our economics, because if you look at it in the long run, it's gonna be dangerous to our children. It's just another form of, say, drug abuse or alcoholism. And eventually maybe we'll have to put together a group called "Gamblers Anonymous" or something like that. So rather than going through all that later on, when maybe the profits that's made today on gambling will have to be spent tomorrow on rehabilitation. So that's what I mean when I say that when you make decisions in the Traditional Council, you have to project into the future.

**BW-H:** How does that relate to the cigarette smuggling?

**JAKE:** There's a lot of families involved in that, and some of them are unemployed. They're trying to make some fast money on the side, and some of them are really good people who don't see anything wrong with it.

But we see that tobacco smuggling is going to cause more disharmony between ourselves and the border people, because we're trying very hard to survive as it is, and to keep our free border-crossing rights intact, without that affecting us elsewhere. It's hard to defend yourself -- your people

-- when you've got negative things to defend. We have to defend our border rights, but it's made really difficult in that kind of situation.

**BW-H:** How do you explain to Native people, who haven't had the experiences you have had, who don't understand the Traditional ways? What kind of bridge is it possible to build for them?

**JAKE:** Well, what we provide is educational materials, like the radio station where I tell stories

of what happened to me, you know. (Laughs)

So, today we [the Longhouse people] are accepted [among non-Longhouse community members]. In fact, when any problems arise, they always come to our people, because the imposed, elected councils can only go so far. You know, they have to be loyal to the government.

And we ourselves still have a national



Gail A. Schlake

again. So now I think we have only one dairy farm that still sends out milk.

**BW-H:** Would there be environmental reasons why...

**JAKE:** Yea, that's another reason why they kinda feel like they don't want to farm anymore, because they don't trust the soil. There could be so much poison in there that -- you know -- some of them don't even plant their little garden

in the Condolence.

**BW-H:** Well, we know that there is tension in the community here, that there are conflicts at Akwesasne between the three councils...

**JAKE:** Well, today you can safely say that all the councils here are working together, because we have come to the understanding that the further apart we are, the more they can use our situation

spirit: we have our own passports. This radio station is licensed by the Mohawk Nation and not any other government. And, you know, we just try to survive that way. We'll take it as far as it can take us. It's not that we mean disrespect to any other people or nation, it's just that we want to be respected as a separate and independent and equal nation or people, with our own culture and traditions, and our language. And that's where we stand. And that's why we want to make it available to our grandchildren -- we just don't want to walk away from that responsibility.

**BW-H:** The concepts of the Tree of Peace, the Longhouse and the Confederacy are a very strong foundation. They seem stronger and more permanent and compelling than those of many other Native traditions, which of course try to do the same things -- like to heal the Earth and bring people together in a just and peaceful society. There's something about the *Hotinosionni* tradition that seems so solid -- Akwesasne Notes came from here, because there was some solid foundation. What made the Confederacy so much stronger than the other Indian nations that have less to hold onto now?

**JAKE:** I think it's because we have our own constitution, a guideline that we follow. It's real natural laws we were given, eh. And it's ingrained in us, to make us able to survive, and it's our top priority to be restricted to the Great Law of Peace, our constitution.

In fact, the U.S. Constitution was derived from our Great Law. This goes back to the Albany Congress in 1754. Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, and all those people were all there, meeting with representatives of the Six Nations. Because, at that time, all the Thirteen Colonies were fighting amongst each other, about who was gonna control what. So a big meeting was called in Onondaga, at our capital, and they said "Well we're gonna have to meet with these people. They're always fighting amongst themselves." And they remembered when their people were always fighting amongst themselves. And they said, "We must go to them and offer them a way for them to organize themselves, so they won't be so much having to fight each other."

There are historians right now gathering a lot of evidence on that. Professor Donald Grindle out in California, is working on the *Tree of Peace* [Society] project right now, doing lots of research.

Dr. Greg Schaaf is another historian. He has a Ph. D. from the University of California at Santa Barbara. When he was going to school he ran across the Morgan Papers. Some woman called him, looking for a historian to look at these papers she had found in her attic. They had been handed down to her. This woman was something like ninety years old at the time. Her name was Susannah Morgan. She was the great-granddaughter of George Morgan, who was the first Indian agent for the Continental Congress during the American Revolution.

The documents that Greg uncovered were letters written by, you know, George Washington, John Hancock, and all these people. And when he [Greg Schaaf] started studying these papers from George Morgan, agent between the [Iroquois] confederacy and the other indigenous nations and the Continental Congress, he was very disturbed. Because it seemed like the people in Philadelphia at the time -- I guess George Washington and all of them -- would send Morgan to the Confederacy to deliver a message; but when he got back, they would have completely turned around the way of thinking of the Indian people. And because he didn't ever want the truth about what he was doing to get out, Morgan -- when he left office -- took all these

documents away from sight and hid them. And this is what just surfaced about ten years ago or so. This discovery will help us in our land claims and so forth too.

**BW-H:** I guess that what Morgan did helped lead the way to Sullivan's Expedition as well, when Washington sent his general to "exterminate the vermin" of the Seneca Nation. Would you say that that's true, that by telling lies about the Indian people -- telling people that they

at least you're talking one-to-one, eh. And you know what you want and they know what they want, so you can compromise. And, that way, finally you come out so both sides are fine. But when it's in court, it's all one-sided and you have to take what you can get, and someone else makes that decision.

**BW-H:** As a Chief in the Confederacy, how do you spend your time?

**JAKE:** Well today was a good day,



Gail A. Schlke

were "savages" and so forth -- he lent legitimacy to the outright slaughter and plunder of Native peoples and their land that was to follow in the years after the [American] Revolution?

**JAKE:** Oh yeah. Of course.

In the account in Sullivan's journals, when he encountered the Seneca nation's lands and the cornfields they had there, he describes the ears of corn they had as eighteen inches long, and the stalks were eighteen feet high. It's pretty hard to believe.

I read that one time here [at the radio station, over the air], and this old man called in, and he says, "You know, when I was young we used to plant corn like that. And we used to use a chainsaw to cut it down!" (Laughs) He thought it was just fooling around, but that's what it actually says in the journals of Sullivan.

**BW-H:** What about the land claims that the Mohawk nation is involved in? Could you comment on their progress?

**JAKE:** Yeah. We're presently involved in land claims negotiations, and there's a lot of things involved in that. It might take years and years to settle, you know. But we'd rather settle out of court, 'cause then

'cause I didn't get called away for a meeting or anything like that. Everyday it seems like I've gotta leave the station to go to some environmental meeting, or maybe a nation meeting for something that came up. Or maybe some couple will be having some problems between each other -- you know, a lot of stuff like that.

**BW-H:** So it's a part of your responsibilities to deal with interpersonal sorts of issues too?

**JAKE:** Oh yeah.

**BW-H:** And how do you use the radio station, what do you do here?

**JAKE:** I kinda manage it, I guess.

**BW-H:** And what kinds of programming happen from here?

**JAKE:** Well, we want to satisfy everybody, so we don't wanna get too political all the time. We're just like any other radio station, but between the songs we might throw on a tape about the environment -- you know, that kind of stuff. We try to educate at the same time that we entertain.

I have a language program on there that we're gonna be starting back up pretty soon. It was half an hour of Mohawk language, and the schools were picking it up,

and -- all of a sudden -- we ran out of words. You know a lot of work has to go into these programs: it takes about two weeks to think of enough words to fill up a half hour and jot 'em down, and then it takes about ten minutes to put 'em on tape. It's really frustrating, you know, and I really need a lot of help in that area. So if you know anyone who might be helpful in our language programme, let us know.

We're trying to develop a really massive language programme, you know, where we can do teaching lessons right on the air. You know, right from the studio here. I'm working on a proposal right now, and it's gonna cost around \$65,000. But we're gonna do this. We're gonna bring in the teachers that work in the schools now, and also the linguists -- our own linguists that went to school for that. And they can provide us with the correct way to put such a programme together. 'Cause I could throw one together, but I want to know how to bring it out where people could easily understand. The method is what I lack.

**BW-H:** What generation at Akwesasne is missing the language?

**JAKE:** Well, probably the next generation down from me, and that's the people around twenty-five to thirty years old. Really only half of that group can actually speak. You'll find on our reserve only about five little kids that can speak fluent Mohawk.

We did a survey maybe five years ago, and we used the population figure of 25,000, because we have seven different Mohawk communities. Now the linguists told us that you need three quarters of the population speaking fluently in order for that language to survive. And so, what we found is that we only have three thousand speakers left, and most of them are here. So that tells us that we are really in deep trouble, eh. That's why I'm really pushing

this, because, without our language, where's our culture, eh?

**BW-H:** You do speak fluently yourself?

**JAKE:** Oh yeah, thanks to my parents. 'Cause when I went to school they wouldn't allow us to speak English in the house. They said, "You go to school and learn how they do it on the outside. But when you come home, you hang that English outside the door."

But it's not like that now. The English comes inside the door with the TV, the radio and everything. So now's the time to reverse that. On the radio we're gonna talk Mohawk. We're gearing up for total immersion in Mohawk for the radio station. That's down the road, eh.

**BW-H:** In Notes we can see an idea of unification, of pulling together Native people and non-Native people -- all people -- on Native issues. But not only that -- also in other related sorts of struggles. It's a very broad spectrum, and very inclusive as well. It doesn't leave white people or anyone else out. It seems a very generous way of visioning the future.

**JAKE:** Yeah, when you look at everything, I guess it's a really big job, a big undertaking. We have a hard enough time

just to meet with people on the street in Cornwall, you know.

**BW-H:** It seems to me that there's a lot of power in this small community which is surrounded by smokestacks on all sides and which is one of the most environmentally unfit areas on the continent. It's astounding that from this place should come a journal that has for twenty years been the visionary voice of such a broad-based social, political, and spiritual movement, and the source of inspiration and hope for people as far apart as Toronto, the West Coast, the southern United States, Europe, Australia...

**JAKE:** Well, I think if we had some professional help from the outside, maybe a person that had worked with papers before, that could give us some ideas we would make it grow even stronger than what it is. We don't have time to go to our neighbours and ask them, "Can you help us out with this or that," you know. We don't have the money to provide for them while they give us advisory assistance. All we're always concentrating on is, "How are we going to survive?" You know, like "Let's get this issue out, it's late." We can only concentrate on surviving, and we need to get beyond that. We have to get beyond that.

**BW-H:** Does the community understand the broad impact of Notes outside this area? Is there a general understanding that this journal goes so far and wide, and influences so many people from so many different backgrounds?

**JAKE:** Oh yeah, I think so.

Once in awhile we go to the staff and we have a pep-talk, eh. You know, "Don't feel down, we've got a lot to do." We just have to kinda build each other up all the time, eh, because it's real frustrating work sometimes. Any peace group in the world will tell you that. It's really frustrating, because you're constantly looking at that society and at what you're pushing for -- and you know, it doesn't even jive. The two don't even fit together somehow. So it puts you where you're always frustrated.

But when you meet with people that have similar ideas and teachings and principles, then it makes you feel good. So it's good that people should meet together periodically just to lift each other up.

**BW-H:** Do you think that Notes is going to be able to go on, to continue its work despite the fire, and despite the rather volatile situation on the reserve here?

**JAKE:** Oh yeah, we're gonna go on. We've got to go on. We can't be held back by a fire, eh. It happens all the time. What burned was the material things. They might have had a lot of value, including historical value. But there's still tomorrow, and we can still make new history. You know, we can't give up. We have to rise up again. □

### Correction

*In our last issue we failed to mention (nor did we request permission to use) the source of a graphic on page 9. The storefront pictured is from the logo of New Words bookstore in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Our sincere apologies to the artist, Linda Bourke, and to New Words bookstore.*

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by April Carter

*Reprinted from Nomos XIX: Anarchism (edited by J. Roland Pennock and John C. Chapman. New York: New York University Press, 1978).*

The attitudes to violence within the anarchist tradition are complex and contradictory, and the issue remains contentious among anarchists today. In the past the advocates, or at least the defenders, of violence have predominated. There is, however, also an important strand of anarchist thought which has insisted on the intrinsic importance of nonviolence for anarchism. Tolstoy is the most important spokesman.<sup>1</sup> This essay is concerned with the question of whether anarchist beliefs logically require adherence to nonviolence, and whether anarchist commitments tend nevertheless to encourage celebration of violence. For the purposes of this discussion it is necessary to assume a minimum set of ideas which comprise the core of anarchist theory, despite the diverse interpretations and emphases of individual anarchist thinkers. Nonviolence too has varying connotations, but is taken here to mean simply a total renunciation of violence, whatever the circumstances.

There are three preliminary grounds for suggesting that anarchists are committed by their own beliefs to renounce violence: the necessary association of violence with the state; the close links between violence and authoritarianism; and the nonviolence implied by anarchist values.

The very concept of the state has violence built into it, as it is suggested by Weber's well-known and often adopted definition of the state as a body having a monopoly of legitimate force within a given territory. Since anarchists reject the notion of legitimacy in relation to the state, they are committed to oppose a monopoly of illegitimate force. The persuasiveness of the anarchist case against the state has been greatly increased by the scale of violence used by some modern states against their own people -- the Stalinist terror compared with Tsarist repression, for example -- and by the vastly increased capacity for destruction wielded by states as a result of modern science. "Atomic warfare makes anarchists of us all" is seen as a stock generalization by William O. Reichert writing in 1969.<sup>2</sup>

Secondly, anarchists who espouse an anti-authoritarian philosophy cannot ignore the sociological links between violence and authoritarianism. Armies, which are designed to perform certain types of violence, are exceptionally authoritarian and hierarchical types of organization, and if they seek political power are notoriously destructive of parliamentary and liberal regimes. The impact of war undermines civil liberties, and prolonged civil war may result in authoritarian and centralized rule. It can be persuasively argued that the civil war in Russia destroyed popular political energies and enthusiasm and provided the Bolsheviks with the excuse to eliminate all their rivals so consolidating their dictatorship.

Thirdly, the libertarian and individualistic values of anarchism appear to be basically incompatible with the violent infliction of the most extreme wounds on an individual's body, mind, and spirit and the denial of life. Given a commitment to ensure that we all live life more abundantly, anarchists cannot denigrate the intrinsic value to be placed on life and health. Even Hobbes, the most rigorous philosopher of the necessity of state power, admitted the inherent and

irreducible tendency of the "natural man" to resist the threat of chains and execution. Most anarchists are prepared to uphold the absolute rights of this natural man to life and freedom against the claims of conventionally understood social interest and political necessity. If they deny the right of execution to the state in any circumstances there are difficulties in arrogating this right to themselves.

There are therefore some immediate grounds to assume that anarchist beliefs entail repudiation of certain forms of violence in certain circumstances. Whether the anarchist is required, if consistent in his or her beliefs, to renounce all forms of violence is examined below. It is, however, necessary at this point to distinguish two different sets of circumstances in which anarchists must articulate their attitudes to violence. Like other minority groups, anarchists have often to decide whether or not they are prepared to give qualified support to political movements whose goals or methods they do not wholly approve, but who represent the cause of progress against racism, colonialism, capitalism, or dictatorship. At this level interesting questions of principle and tactics arise, but the issue of violence is only part of a

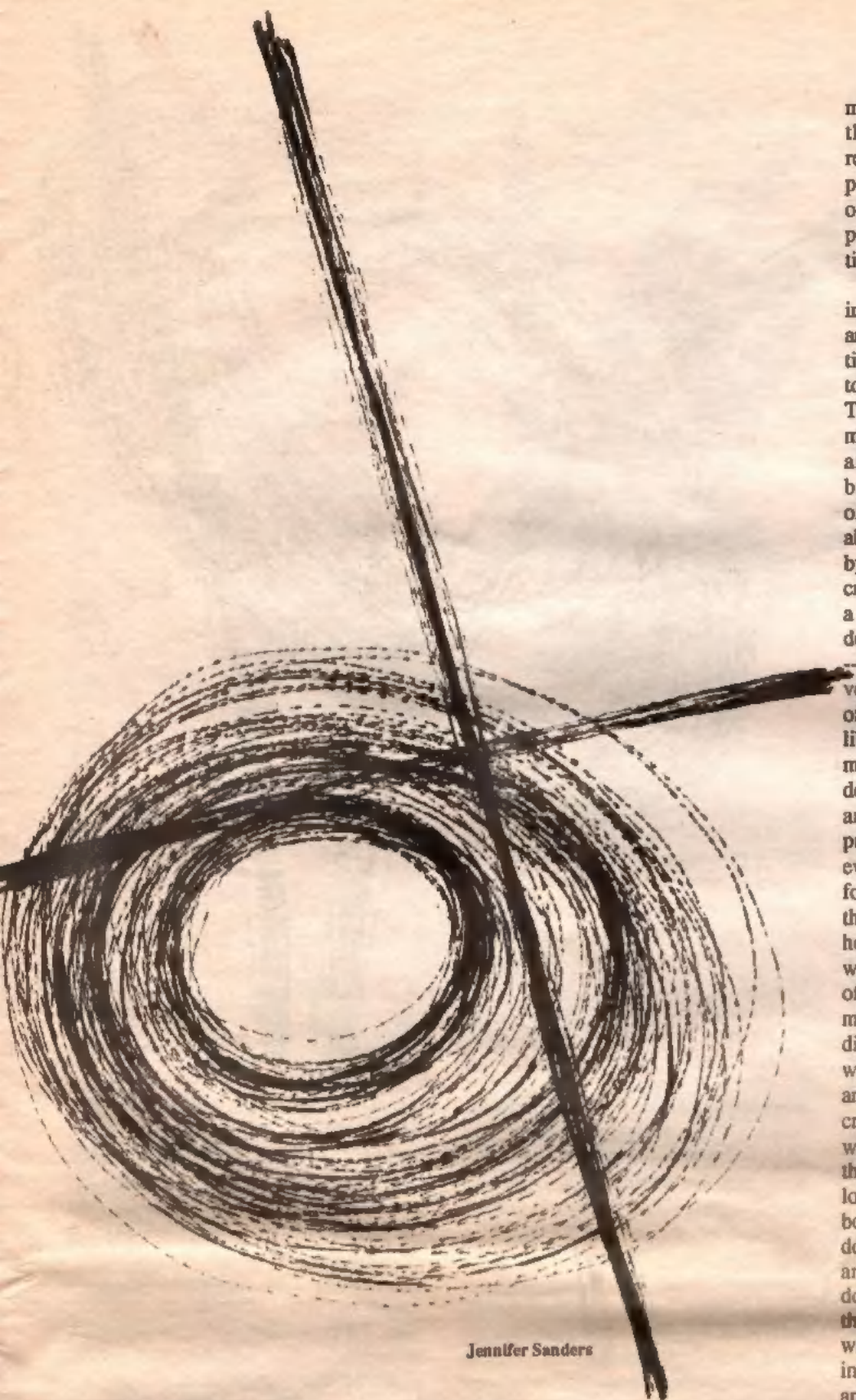
broader dilemma. This essay does not therefore deal with the question of anarchist attitudes to violence by other organized political groups. Instead it concentrates on anarchist attitudes to violence initiated by anarchists, or violence in popular uprisings, which anarchists can wholeheartedly support, although in the latter case complications inevitably arise because of the involvement of other political parties.

There are at least four lines of argument which anarchists might employ to escape the conclusion that they are logically obliged to renounce the use of violence:

1. that anarchists oppose the state because it is the supreme embodiment of repression, not because they oppose state violence as such;
2. that the violence adopted by anarchists is different in kind from the violence of the state, and is not therefore inconsistent with anarchist values;
3. that revolutionary violence does not promote authoritarianism;
4. that even if violence is in principle incompatible with anarchist values, its use is justifiable and inescapable in the pursuit of anarchist goals.



# ANARCHISM



Jennifer Sanders

# & VIOLENCE

## I. VIOLENCE AND REPRESSION

In order to consider the first argument, we need to look at the nature of political repression. There are two ways in which the state suppresses freedom: by indoctrination which "persuades" people to surrender their liberty, and by coercion, including violence, which forces them to do so. It is therefore possible to suggest the hypothetical case in which a repressive regime is maintained solely by brainwashing its citizens from the cradle to the grave, and to claim that anarchists would be as opposed to this regime as one which relied mainly on prison camps and firing squads. This extreme case is, however, both practically and logically impossible, since the total success of indoctrination depends upon the regime's ability to restrict by force any activity which might endanger belief: thus indoctrination requires strict censorship, restrictions on individual freedom of travel, and the forcible elimination of any unexpected eruption of individual rebelliousness, as envisaged in the totalitarian utopias of Zamyatin's *We* and Orwell's *1984*. Unless the realm of thought and belief is totally closed, there is always the possibility that people will change their minds. If a regime allows people real

freedom to alter their ideas it is not in any simple sense relying on indoctrination, nor is it wholly repressive. Indeed a commonsense criterion of the repressiveness of a regime is the degree of force it uses against those who resist or rebel -- this violence is not only a consequence of a repressive ideology, it is part of the meaning of repression. In fact, the anarchist who claims that the truly repressive nature of the state still exists in parliamentary regimes, but is masked by the prevailing ideology, has to point to the brutal violence used against those outside the political consensus -- for example rioting blacks, or to the violence used, when the state feels challenged, against demonstrators or strikers.

If we examine the question whether violence is intrinsic to repression from the standpoint of the individual seeking freedom, we reach the same conclusion. There are well-known difficulties defining freedom, but it is reasonable to start from the basic assumption that an individual's freedom depends on the absence of immediate and hurtful physical constraints and of extreme sanctions: an individual is freer out of jail than in it; freer without the constant threat or arrest and torture; and freer if he is not in fear for his life.

Thus freedom in general increases the more the powers of violence wielded by the state against the individual are restricted, and the more the use of these powers is restricted. Anarchists, instead of looking to the rule of law to maximize personal freedom, look to the total abolition of the organs of state violence.

A slightly different way of approaching the problems of whether anarchists are committed by the logic of their position to regard violence itself as an evil is to ask why anarchists oppose the state. The concept of the state entails three major institutions: bureaucracy, police, and the army. The administrative bureaucracy does not raise the question of violence directly, although it is arguable that the nature of bureaucracy may, by creating psychological remoteness, increase the inhumanity of a prison service, a ministry of the interior, or a defense department. But any critique of the police -- although it may also focus on their vested interest in surveillance and control of the population and in restricting civil liberties -- must entail a criticism of their methods, whether in suppressing demonstrations or extorting confessions, and on the ways in which the state punishes captured criminals. Violence is even more central to the role of the armed forces. Anarchists may hate war because they see it in Bourne's phrase as "the health of the state" and because wars are waged by powerful elites at the expense of the poor and powerless. However, war means killing and maiming enemy soldiers and civilians who are in the path of war, and destroying towns and villages; and modern war means mass and indiscriminate killing of civilians, if not of whole populations. It is indeed clear from the anarchists' own writings that they loath the punitive violence of the state because of its barbarity, that they condemn the inhumanity of mass executions and deportations by regimes putting down revolt, and that they are appalled by the cruel and indiscriminate nature of war.<sup>3</sup> Anarchists are not alone in rejecting the more savage forms of punishment and warfare, but their rejection is more total because it is not mitigated by the orthodox justifications in political theory for rule by the sword and *raison d'etat*, and it is more passionate and consistent than criticisms of state violence by liberals and socialists.

It is therefore reasonable to conclude, both from the logic of their position and from the evidence of many anarchist writers, that anarchists believe violence is an evil as it is practiced by the state, and not only because it is practised by the state and is used for repressive ends.

## II. ANARCHIST VIOLENCE

When considering whether anarchists can claim that the nature of the violence used by their side is qualitatively different from that used by the state, several criteria present themselves: the type of violence used, the spirit in which it is used, the extent of violence used, and whom it is used against. It is of course easy to tilt the argument by contrasting the purest forms of anarchist violence with, for example, the worst atrocities of colonial regimes or the H-bomb, and there are clearly circumstances in which police or military forces do act with restraint and discrimination. Nevertheless, typical forms of anarchist violence can be contrasted with typical forms of state violence. The violence most associated with anarchists, and praised within the anarchist tradition, is the assassination attempt against the individual tyrant and the insurrectionary battle at the barricades, or its rural equivalent of the

peasants marching on the local town.

Both types of anarchist violence rely on limited technology -- a gun or homemade bomb, in the first instance, any weapon which comes to hand in the second -- as opposed to the arsenals of destruction available to the armed forces and even the police. Both are heroic forms of violence, involving direct risk to those who take part: the role of the individual assassin acting on his own initiative can be contrasted with the remoteness and corresponding lack of passion and personal responsibility felt by judges who order executions, or generals who order an attack. (This distinction would not of course apply to a conspiratorial organization with its own "generals".) Both can be limited in their extent and discriminate in their targets: assassination attempts are ideally directed against specific individuals who are in some sense guilty of injustice, or at least are in public and powerful positions and representative of a regime; insurrectionary fighting is limited to the forces of the state who attempt to suppress the rebels. They therefore contrast with the indiscriminate killing of most warfare. We have therefore instead of a pacifist philosophy of anarchism a kind of just war theory, in which violence is to be used discriminately for ends which are just.

The validity of anarchist violence must be judged, however, not only by the degree of violence used, but by its effectiveness, by its results (which may be unpredictable and lead to quite uncontrolled violence), and by its influence on the future actions of anarchists and other protesters.

The effectiveness of exemplary acts of violence must presumably be measured by their impact on public opinion, and in particular on the workers and peasants whom anarchists seek to arouse. Political effectiveness is always dependent on the specific context and the precise nature of an action, so simple generalization about the value of propaganda by deed is clearly impossible. Moreover, the opinions of both contemporaries and historians about the short-term or long-term efficacy of various anarchist campaigns of violence have differed -- given the difficulties of finding clear evidence and criteria for denoting success or failure in these circumstances, there is a natural tendency to confirm personal predispositions toward or against this type of action. There are, however, certainly reasonable grounds to doubt, in most political contexts, whether an assassin's bomb or an abortive attempt to raise the barricades will further sympathy for the anarchist cause in general, or for specific social goals; and there is therefore even greater doubt whether such action will act as a clarion call to the oppressed to right their wrongs. In a debate about the moral justification for propaganda by deed the onus is clearly on its proponents to show convincingly that it will work.

It is possible to generalize more confidently about the probable repercussions of anarchist violence at the level of governmental response: it is extremely likely that it will be made a pretext for mass arrests, banning of radical movements, and quite possibly the execution of anarchist leaders -- as happened frequently in response to anarchist violence in the last decades of the nineteenth century and early years of this century; or it may lead directly to the setting up of the apparatus of a police state, one result of the nihilist assassination campaign in Tsarist Russia.<sup>4</sup> At best it is likely to increase police harassment of radicals and to reduce civil liberties. The just war doctrine included the principle that the

likely benefits must outweigh the probably costs of war; in the case of exemplary anarchist violence the certain costs have usually greatly outweighed the problematic gains.

The greatest disadvantage of the doctrine of limited anarchist violence is that in practice it suffers from much the same weakness as the just war theory itself -- that over time the goals tend to be exalted with ideological fervor to justify increasing the scope of violence, while all practical and moral restraints are removed from the actual means used. Thus the selective assassination attempt, directed with great personal risk at the individual tyrant, easily becomes in other hands -- including anarchist hands -- the bomb tossed into the crowded restaurant on the vague justification that it will mostly kill the bourgeoisie, or simply that it will create a stir. The anarchist campaign in the 1890s declined in this way into indiscriminate slaughter. This objection applies more strongly to the use of bombs than it does to attempts to start a local uprising -- though the latter may involve unnecessary destruction. (In terms of contemporary relevance, the latter is almost totally outmoded: barricades are only likely to be thrown up as defensive action against the police.) The likelihood of setting in train indiscriminate imitation of acts of exemplary violence is however a crucial objection to sanctioning an initial violent act, which purely in its own terms might claim considerable moral and political justification. It is easier to initiate a habit of violent protest than to limit it, as we are currently relearning.

There is therefore a case for renouncing exemplary forms of anarchist violence on grounds of prudence and of moral responsibility, even if violence is seen as justifiable in principle. A more fundamental objection can, however, be made to any attempt to justify anarchist violence: that anarchist values are inherently and necessarily incompatible with use of violence, given anarchist respect for the sovereignty of the in-

dividual and belief in the unqualified rights of each individual. No anarchist society would sanction one execution, let alone mass executions or wars on other societies. It can be urged that the standards of the ideal society cannot be applied to the struggle to realize that society. But anarchists have always rejected the idea that there are two sets of values, one to be applied now and the other reserved to the indefinite future. Anarchism is a creed to be demonstrated in practice. The central anarchist objection to Marxism is that Marxists underline the dichotomy between ends and means, and hence in practice have found endless "realistic" reasons for postponing their alleged goals. (This question is taken up in more detail later.)

Some anarchists might, however, be prepared to argue that the ruling classes of the existing society have forfeited the right to anarchist sympathies and are therefore morally in a separate category. There is a strain in anarchist thought which depicts execution of the oppressors as a positive revolutionary act, and which can be traced from Bakunin through the anarchist assassins to the Durruti column in the Spanish civil war. This tendency to group individuals into abstract social categories, and then to invest certain categories, like the workers, with supreme virtues and others, like the capitalists, with supreme evil is however, contradictory to the central tenets of anarchist thought. It is true that Emile Henry is credited with the saying that "there are no innocent bourgeois," but the attitude of mind which classifies groups of people under labels as a prelude to liquidating them can best be described as "totalitarian", in the sense Hannah Arendt intends in her discussion of the logic of totalitarian ideology,<sup>5</sup> not anarchist. The anarchist concern with the concrete individual, rejection of the rights of the majority over the minority, and condemnation of fictitious entities like "the people" used as a guise to take away individual rights, all suggest dislike of political labels. Anarchists also attack the



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Marxist dogmatism about social classes, which stands in the way of truly humanist and revolutionary attitudes -- it is not accidental that Bakunin is also the most Marxist of anarchists, even though he too criticized the exclusiveness of the Marxist class theory. If anarchists distrust political fictions that justify the denial of actual freedoms, they must distrust more a style of thinking which justifies the most final denial of freedom -- death. Moreover the logical connection between belief in revolutionary violence and this inhuman and abstract style of ideological thought suggests the danger for anarchists that violence will destroy the spirit of libertarianism.

### III. VIOLENCE AND AUTHORITARIANISM

If it is true that the nature of anarchist values should preclude violence, then whether or not violence promotes authoritarianism is a purely secondary issue. It is, however, an issue important in its own right; and, given the primary stress of anarchist thought on freedom as the central value, it is clearly relevant to anarchists who insist on the need for violence. Three major questions can be raised about the connection between violence and authoritarianism: whether the nature of violence requires hierarchical organization; whether the prolonged experience of violence destroys the qualities of popular initiative and resistance upon which anarchists depend; and whether violence encourages authoritarian reactions. It is only possible here to sketch in possible answers.

The intrinsic link between organized violence and authoritarian organization is suggested by the nature of most armies. It is clear that the specifically anarchist forms of violence can escape the need for elaborate organization, and the initial stages of a popular uprising also avoid it, but the problem is directly relevant to civil war.

It is possible to challenge the necessity of military hierarchy for a popular army

by suggesting that the traditional gap between officers and other ranks have reflected the divisions of a class society, and that authoritarian discipline is required to make regular soldiers and conscripts kill and risk being killed, whereas revolutionary armies are egalitarian and enthusiastic. Most guerilla armies have, however, relied on hierarchical organization and have often exacted a discipline even stricter than that of regular armies. Even the anarchist columns in Spain accepted military commanders, although they insisted on democratic forms of decision-making. Whether this method of running an army was militarily efficient is still debatable. Obvious difficulties arose when anarchist columns refused to obey general battle orders, and some anarchists who supported merging the political militias into the regular army thought too much time was lost at the front in discussion. On the other hand George Orwell, as an officer in the POUM militia, was prepared to see the advantages of leadership by democratic persuasion because of the crucial importance to the revolutionary side of the morale and conviction of those fighting.<sup>6</sup>

Anarchists can make the more general point that it is mistaken in all forms of human activity to assume that a hierarchical style of organization will promote genuine efficiency, and they can cite the striking ineffectiveness of hidebound general staffs: for example, in World War I. Nevertheless this anarchist belief in spontaneous and cooperative organization is less persuasive in relation to military activity than it is in other spheres. In peacetime activities it is quite possible that temporary chaos, duplication of effort, and some lapses in organizational efficiency may be compensated for by greater enthusiasm and inventiveness; or, where the situation is more structured but based on democratic principles, that time lost in reaching agreement ensures greater cooperation afterward. But it can be fatal to lose a battle. Large-scale violence does suggest the need for leadership and discipline.



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While the problem of authoritarian organization impinges on those engaged in violence, the authoritarian tendencies which arise from the experience of violence concern a whole society. It is important to note, however, that wars may have a radicalizing as well as a conservative influence. War justifies concentration of power and suppression of civil liberties, but it has also unleashed revolutionary movements or promoted internal dissent. The radicalizing tendency may be due to the breakdown of old modes of life and disillusionment with the war and the effectiveness of the government -- as in World War I. A civil war in its early stages is likely to unleash popular enthusiasm for rapid change, both when a revolutionary party is challenging the old order and when people are rising to the defense of the revolution. There is, however, a danger that in the long run war weariness, and the social problems created by war, will sap popular enthusiasm and initiative, promote a reaction away from revolutionary consciousness, and encourage Bonapartism. The demands of military necessity may also undermine original libertarian ideals -- true of some of the anarchist leaders in the Spanish civil war.

Sporadic acts of violence are less likely to have any permanent results, though even isolated violent protests may encourage an authoritarian frame of mind, and an extended campaign of violence is certainly likely to encourage popular opinion to sanction destruction of civil liberties and favour savage measures of repression -- both reactions have occurred in Britain in response to IRA attacks. The likelihood that anarchist or other political violence will encourage an authoritarian reaction by the government was raised earlier, but it is more important to stress here the impact on popular habits of mind. Anarchists might in tactical terms welcome government repression, but promoting authoritarian habits in society is directly contrary to anarchist goals. There is no absolute necessity that an act of violence will strengthen popular reliance on the state -- in some circumstances it might be seen as a blow of deliverance from tyranny -- but these circumstances are much rarer than anarchist theorists of violence have assumed.

It can be concluded that there is a tendency for violence to promote forms of authoritarianism for various sociological and psychological reasons, but there are exceptions to this tendency. In itself the connection between violence and authoritarianism is not a sufficient reason for anarchist to abjure all types of violence, though it has a bearing on the problem of ends and means. □

#### FOOTNOTES

1. Tolstoy rejected the label "anarchist" because of its association with violence, but is generally regarded by anarchists as one of their major theorists.
2. William O. Reichert, "Anarchism, freedom, and power," *Anarchy*, 111 (May 1970); reprinted from *Ethics*.
3. See, for example, P. Kropotkin, *Law and Authority*; Emma Goldman, *Anarchism and Other Essays*; Herbert Read, *Anarchism and Order*; Alex Comfort, *Authority and Delinquency in the Modern State*.
4. See historical chapters in George Woodcock, *Anarchism* (London: Penguin 1963); Irving L. Horowitz, ed., *The Anarchists*, (New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1964); and Richard Pipes, *Russia under the Old Regime* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1974), pp 297-302.
5. Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1953), pp. 468-74.
6. George Orwell, *Homage to Catalonia* (London: Penguin, 1964).

To be continued next issue.

# Sustaining Development or Developing Sustainability?

by Don Alexander

The following article was delivered as a talk to a student conference at Trent University called "Discovering Our Future" in May of this year. The theme of the conference was sustainable development, with special reference to the Brundtland Commission report. The Brundtland Commission (formally known as the World Commission on Environment and Development) was a UN-sponsored commission, chaired by Norwegian Prime Minister Madame Gro Brundtland, which produced a report entitled *Our Common Future* (Oxford University Press, 1987). The talk has been shortened for reasons of space.

## "Development" -- Cure or Disease?

The Brundtland Commission's document, *Our Common Future*, does a good job of painting a picture of our current environmental dilemma. Acid rain, a thinning ozone layer, an increase

access for the products of developing countries, lower interest rates, greater technology transfer, and significantly larger capital flows.

## "Another Development" Model

In opposition to this "standard" model of development, the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation of Sweden has given us what they call "Another Development" model. The defining characteristics of this are: it is need-oriented, not profit and growth-oriented; it is endogenous (that is, it accords with the values of each culture and leaves the people of that culture free to determine those values); it stresses self-reliance rather than increased dependence on the world market; it is ecologically sound (development which tailors itself to the carrying capacity of local, regional, and global ecosystems), and it is based on transforming existing power structures such that self-management and participatory democracy replace the current system of entrenched economic and political privilege.

unchallenged the hegemony of market institutions, imposes a Western-style development model, encourages more production for export, calls for a new era of economic growth, and leaves power in the hands of existing governments, multilateral development organizations, and multinationals.

The ecological consequences of this model cannot help but be devastating. Increased trade and industrialization will boost energy use; urbanization will over-stress ecosystems and existing infrastructure, and technology transfer will introduce technologies, such as biotechnology and nuclear power, which are potentially more damaging to the environment. In addition, increased consumerism will encourage the growth of artificial needs turning people into junkies insensitive to the effect of their habit on the surrounding biosphere.

## The Commission and Neo-Classical Economics

The economic model of the Commis-



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in the greenhouse effect, toxic pollution, erosion and desertification, deforestation, and species loss are among the issues discussed in the report, and the Commission has succeeded in putting these issues on the international political agenda. The report also shows the inter-relationship between the ecological crisis and the social crisis -- how a massive Third World debt and urban overcrowding are both a cause and an effect of environmental degradation.

But, in the end, despite the parts of its analysis which are compelling, the Brundtland Commission generally mistakes symptoms for causes, and winds up prescribing more of the same "development" that brought about the problems in the first place. While the report is not monolithic, there is an underlying development model as reflected in the following quotation:

*It is essential that economic growth be revitalized. In practical terms, this means more rapid economic growth in both industrial and developing countries, freer market*

While the Brundtland Commission report pays lip service to these points, it essentially envisions achieving sustainable development through minor modifications of the existing world order. Manfred Max-Neef, a self-described "barefoot economist", challenges this belief that

*it is simply a question of considering one or more additional variables and parameters in order to perfect a model. If this were so, it would then be perfectly logical and natural to conceive as possible an ecological capitalism...an ecological socialism, an ecological conservatism or finally, any other equally ecological and eclectic mixture or combination.... [T]hese very possibilities ...[are] illusory.*

He goes on to argue that "the forms of socio-economic and political organization currently in force in the world are essentially antagonistic to the achievement of a tripartite harmony between Nature, Humans, and Technology."

The Brundtland Commission leaves

sion is the traditional model of neo-classical economics. According to the neo-classical view, the goal of any society should be to increase the number of jobs (regardless of whether they're worthwhile), boost the Gross National Product (ignoring the fact that growth in GNP can indicate social misery more than social health), improve the balance of trade (regardless of whether the products are worth trading and ignoring the effects of fossil fuel consumption), encourage the formation of larger, more efficient firms (thereby further alienating local control), and treat increased availability of consumer goods as the best way to promote social welfare. It is a theory of "trickledown" -- that the greater the orgy at the banquet table, the more crumbs will fall down to the poor. In actual practice, the trickledown strategy has been a gross failure. Over the last twenty-five years, despite efforts at development and modernization, and impressive rates of growth in some Third World countries, poverty has increased in both relative and absolute terms.

## The Degradation of Culture

In addition to accepting the neo-classical economic model, the commissioners have failed to recognize that the degradation of nature is inseparably connected with the degradation of culture. Three examples will serve to illustrate this point. In the early history of modern North America, the introduction of European trade goods (and the increasing dependence of Native people on Europeans) led to the erosion of traditional Native patterns of life and belief systems. This resulted in the slaughter of millions of beaver, marten, muskrat and other species for the fur trade -- to make hats for the European aristocracy -- leading to their virtual extinction in certain areas.

The last twenty years has seen increasing desertification and famine in the Sahel region of Africa. This is due, in large part, to the disruption of the lifestyle of traditional herders and farmers, who have either been forced off their lands to accommodate agribusiness or have been herded into villages to promote social control, as in Ethiopia.

Finally, the obscene overcrowding of Mexico City -- now the largest city in the world, with 20 million people -- is the direct product of the displacement of peasants who do not have an adequate land base in the countryside because the bulk of the land is owned by large landowners.

Social ecosystems are like natural ecosystems; they maintain themselves in relative equilibrium and in relative harmony with their environment as long as they are undisturbed. When massively interfered with, they lose their internal poise and balance; they lose their ability to naturally regenerate themselves. The key to a sustainable economy is producing sustainable cultures, and to produce

also make society viable. These are often less tangible than petroleum or coal, but just as important.

The first of these is community. Human beings cooperate by means of culture: through values, attitudes and social relationships which are passed down from generation to generation. Wolves, ants, and primates also cooperate, but they do so instinctively for the most part. The consequences of allowing community to break down -- with everyone "looking out for #1" -- are not hard to fathom.

Another important cultural resource is diversity. Thousands of different cultures have emerged in different parts of the world, evolving different customs and strategies for survival. The ability of human groups to learn from their neighbours has enabled them to adapt to changing conditions. European civilization -- at one time the most technologically "advanced" -- borrowed much of its technology from the Chinese, crops from Amerindians, mathematics from the Arabs, and philosophy and religion from Greece and Palestine. Today, the most "advanced" society, North America, is imposing its technology and value structures on peoples all across the globe, with the result that many thousands of age-old cultures are being destroyed. These cultures have "worked". They have permitted their members to live in relative harmony with the earth. Every time one of these cultures dies, we lose the possibility of transcending our own culture, of appraising it critically, of opting for different lifeways.

Democracy is also important. For decades, the Soviet Union has been stagnant because its rulers have attempted to concentrate all power in their hands, allowing the people little meaningful participation. Society pays a high price for the fallibility of the few. Today's "glas-

resources. An equitable society is a society which maximizes the potential of each of its citizens, thereby improving everyone's quality of life.

But social qualities like democracy and equality also depend on the individual. Democracy is impossible unless people are capable of weighing evidence, reasoning things out, and making their own independent judgements. The intelligence and knowledge of the many is being wasted, not to mention degraded by manipulative media. Our current ecological crisis is very much a product of too few people and too few institutions having too much decision-making power.

Another important trait which we can either encourage or destroy is versatility. A generation ago, family farmers possessed a variety of skills. They could fix engines, build fences and barns, birth animals, and make tools. Their mixed farming style of life permitted them to incorporate new crops gradually, diversify their financial base, and avoid having "all their eggs in one basket." Like the farmers-fishermen-woodcutters of the Maritimes, these traditional mixed farmers were a type of "renaissance person", concentrating in one individual the knowledge of a number of occupations. Most people today are highly specialized, highly dependent on mass produced goods for their survival. Should a major economic crash occur, a lot of people will be helpless. Only versatility enables people to readily adapt to changing circumstances.

But another point about versatility and self-reliance is that it increases people's pride, their sense of self-worth. If you take a group of people who were formerly independent, and force them to become dependent, you destroy their self-respect. One consequence of this is increased alcoholism, drug abuse -- even suicide.

Other important qualities which we

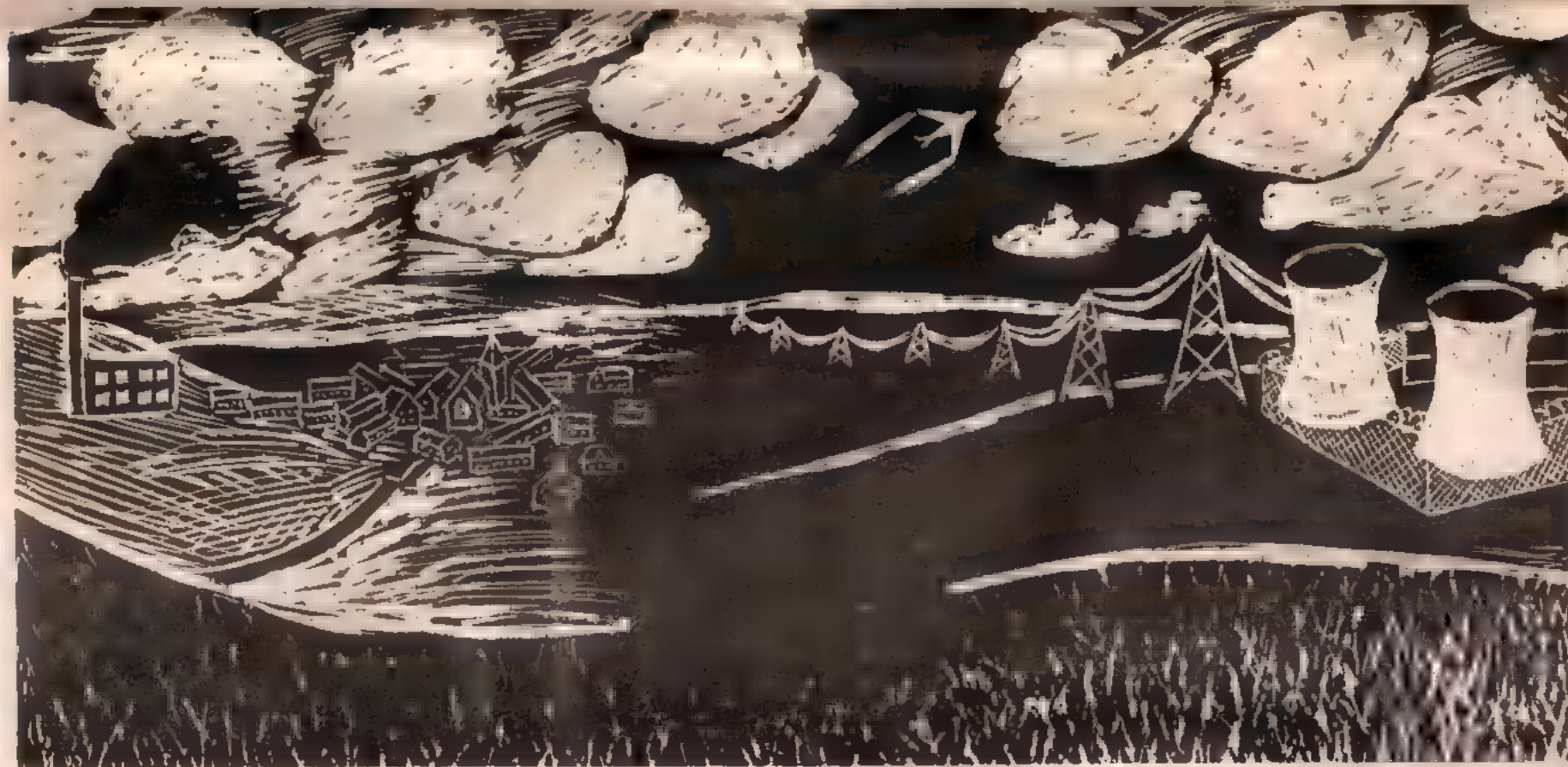
continue the orgy of ecological destruction as long as they get their share of the loot, or the vote. Reciprocity -- considering the needs of others and taking an ecologically and socially responsible position -- is the soul of any sustainable culture.

There's no question we've done a lot in the Western countries -- eliminate material poverty, but have we replaced material poverty with cultural poverty? We live in a society where people think nothing of dumping their garbage by the side of the highway or of spraying weed-killer on their lawn. They're more concerned about their pay cheque at the end of the week, and about buying a new car, than they are about whether their children will inherit a planet worth living on. A culture which has created such a total absence of vision is one that is fighting for its life. If we cannot change our basic orientation to the other species on the planet, and to future generations, then we are no different than a pack of lemmings headed straight for the edge of the cliff.

What I'm suggesting is that this insensitivity, this living in the eternal "now" is, in large measure, a product of modernization. In order to conceive of modernization in its positive aspects, we first need to be clear on its negative aspects.

## A Critique of Modernization

There are five aspects to the modernization process I'd like to talk about: industrialization, urbanization, bureaucracy, the development of mass culture, and the commodification of the economy and social relationships. Industrialization involves increased economic specialization, hierarchical relationships in the workplace (and hence loss of worker autonomy), and diminished local economic control. It leads to an increasingly privatized struggle for survival, and a loss of contact with



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sustainable cultures we must first salvage what is left of those cultures which have sustained themselves in relative harmony with their environment for thousands of years. I am arguing that there is a direct relationship between conservation of "natural resources" and the conservation of what we might choose to call "spiritual" and "cultural" resources.

## Material Poverty vs. Cultural Poverty

Ecologists have focussed attention on our squandering of things natural, but too little attention has been given to the spiritual and cultural resources which

nost" is being imposed in a typically top-down fashion, but it reflects Mikhail Gorbachev's recognition that unless the initiative of people is liberated, the Soviet Union will sink ever deeper in the mire of apathy and inefficiency.

The last cultural resource I'm going to talk about is equality. For decades, Canada was deprived of the energy and enthusiasm of immigrants barred by exclusionist and racist immigration policies. For decades, women were limited to the home, depriving society of their contributions to public life. Oppression and injustice breed apathy and self-hatred; they waste precious talent and

need to nurture are sensitivity and responsibility. The basis of any successful community is the ability of its members to be sensitive to one another's needs and points of view. Sensitivity to natural cycles and processes -- to the natural regions which form the matrix for our activity -- is needed to sustain human life. Amongst the Iroquois, it was a normative principle that people should consider the consequences of their actions "for the seventh generation." All major decisions should take into account the interests of the as yet unborn. Contrast this with the way our society functions: most political and corporate leaders are willing to con-

the reality of natural processes. Urbanization engenders a loss of rootedness and community support systems, and a growth in political apathy and social indifference. Bureaucratization erodes mutual aid networks (and hence promotes dependence on the state), disempowers people, fosters an increasingly invasive security apparatus, and a political elite which is committed to perpetuating its own power. Mass culture fragments community, atomizes individuals, and transforms people into spectators and consumers of pre-packaged culture rather than allowing them to be cultural creators. Finally, commodification invol-

ves a loss of economic self-reliance, the growth of consumerism, and a tendency for human relationships to degenerate into those of buyers and sellers.

We should protect the *social ecosystems* which give rise to cultural and spiritual resources, not just the *natural* ones. Just as air, water and soil can be polluted, so too communities can be degraded, diversity replaced with monoculture, democracy stifled in the interests of "efficiency", and equality crushed in the drive to make a buck. In the interests of allowing free reign to market forces, attitudes, products, and forms of industrial organization are allowed to proliferate which erode intelligence, versatility, sensitivity and responsibility.

#### "Another Development" in Practice

Using the criteria offered by the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, I'd like to talk about some of the initiatives that are being undertaken in various parts of the world that are positive, that embody the spirit of "Another Development". The first group I'd like to mention is *Plenty Canada*, an aid group that evolved out of a hippie commune in Eastern Ontario. Plenty, through its projects in Lesotho, the Caribbean and elsewhere, emphasizes self-reliance, local control, appropriately-scaled and inexpensive technologies, and respecting traditional values. Their projects have included helping villagers plant fruit and nut trees for food and erosion control, establishing community gardens, helping build small scale irrigation and water projects, and introducing renewable energy technologies.

Another project worth mentioning is the *Ladakh Ecological Development Group*. Ladakh is the most northerly part of India, an area the size of Newfoundland, high up in the Himalayan

Ladakh culture with appropriate forms of modern technology. Passive solar Trombe walls were built by local craftsmen, using almost all locally produced materials. Solar water heaters, solar kilns, and windmill generators have also been experimented with. By such methods, Norberg-Hodge is attempting to implement Ivan Illich's injunction that "two thirds of [hu]mankind can still avoid passing through the industrial age, by choosing right now a post-industrial balance."

Two other positive examples I'd like to mention are the *Green Belt* movement and the *Chipko* movement. The Green Belt movement is a movement of rural women in Kenya which is engaged in a massive program of reforestation, with women earning revenue from operating tree nurseries, developing expertise and gaining decision-making power, with the wood from the newly planted forests being harvested for fuel, fodder, food and building materials. In India, in the central state of Uttar Pradesh, largely tribal women have initiated a movement called Chipko or "tree-hugger". The women have resisted the commercial exploitation of the forests for the making of tennis rackets, etc., have opposed the transplantation of exotic species such as eucalyptus (funded by the World Bank) which are useless to the people and do damage to the environment, and have planted new forests with a view to protecting the purity of air, water and soil. The survival rate of the trees they plant is 80% compared with a government average of 20%.

Like the Chipko women, the rubber tappers of the Amazon use the trees of the forest in a sustainable and renewable fashion. To quote a recent newsletter from the Rainforest Action Network, *The rubber tappers' livelihood, based on the extraction of latex from rubber trees and harvesting of tropi-*

recently spent time in jail.

A movement which started in North America and which models itself, to some degree, on the way of life of the continent's Native peoples is the *bioregional* movement. The bioregional movement believes that people ought to discover the attributes of the regions where they live and develop their economic, political and cultural institutions accordingly. It believes that people should make a commitment to place and try to live as equals within the web of life, rather than as lord and master over the biosphere. Their stance is similar to the Haida elder who recently posed the question: 'when are white people going to start treating the land as if they planned to stay?'

Here in Ontario, we have the Tem-Augama Anishnabai who, rather than allow their ancestral homeland -- site of the last major white pine forests in the province -- to be logged off providing saw mills with five more years of work, have proposed that the area be turned into an ecological reserve where the natural processes of old growth forests be studied for 400 years so that future generations might benefit.

#### Mulroney: Rhetoric and Reality

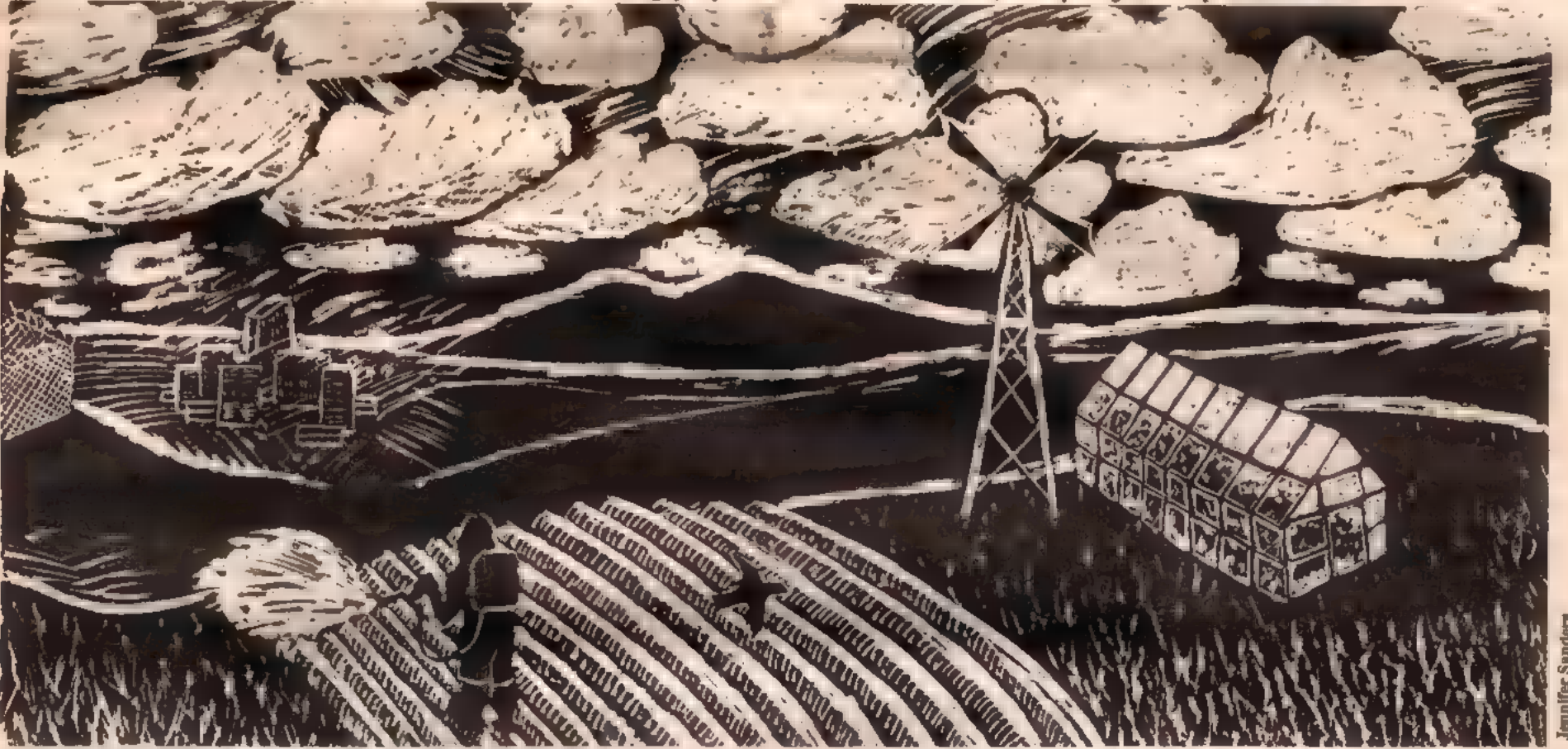
The Mulroney government has been a big booster of "sustainable development", and yet its policies go in the opposite direction. Mulroney is promoting increased trade and industrialization, is seeking to strengthen the role of market forces in economic and social decision-making, and is bankrolling costly and unecological energy megaprojects. He is chopping funding for renewable and energy conservation research, is providing no tax or other incentives for energy-efficiency and recycling, ■ taking little action on toxic pollution in the Great Lakes, and is pulling the

refer you to the franchise owner. The franchise owner will say his hands are tied; all decisions are made at head office, and head office will tell you how they are switching from one pernicious form of styrofoam to another. Meanwhile, landfills all across the continent continue to fill up with their garbage.

The small craftsman was at least responsible for his or her product. With modern corporations, no one is willing to take responsibility. In many cases, the individuals associated with the corporation bear no personal liability for the corporation's actions. They may make one production process less polluting, they may stop using rainforest beef because of public pressure, they may use recycled paper for inter-office memos, but the goal is still to transform the earth's resources into capital and transform their employees into obedient robots. Corporations function according to the law of "grow or die", and a grow or die economy is ecologically and socially destabilizing.

The corporations are not interested in "sustainable development", nor can they be as long as their loyalty is to their "bottom line". As the ends, so the means. How can you harness greed to the achievement of equality and sensitivity? We have to stop assuming that "what's good for the economy" is good for society, because it's patently untrue. If we are going to integrate economic and environmental decision-making, as the Brundtland Commission has recommended, we must put ecological, cultural and spiritual values *first*, and mold our economic institutions accordingly.

The kinds of initiatives that governments are talking about -- recycling, ozone conventions, and pollution controls -- are important, but, ultimately, they are bandaid solutions. They are like trying to put your hand on a spring; the water will just spurt up somewhere else. We need a radical



Mountains. Since 1974, Ladakh, which has traditionally been isolated from contact with the outside world, has been open to tourists from Europe and North America. This was beginning to have disastrous effects as the Ladakhi began to look down on their traditional way of life as inferior, in contrast with the seemingly limitless affluence of the Western tourists. Helena Norberg-Hodge, a Swedish linguist, who was the first Westerner to master the Ladakhi language and to translate it into the Western alphabet, established the Ladakh Ecological Development Group to help combine the best elements of traditional

*cal nuts, exemplifies sustainable use of the tropical forest's resources.*

Chico Mendes, the rubber tappers' leader, pointed out that "A rubber tree can live up to 100 years if you tap it right, affectionately." Mendes was recently murdered by ranching interests who are trying to burn down the forest and drive the rubber tappers away.

*Friends of the Earth Malaysia* and its sister group, the *Consumers' Association of Penang*, have a long, vital history fighting against the destruction of rainforests, the dispossession of tribal peoples, and the pollution of Malaysia's rivers. Several key activists in the group have

rug out from under precisely those cultural and socio-economic groups that could form the nucleus for a sustainable society: Canada's Native people, family farmers, and the inshore fishermen of the Maritimes, etc.

Another thing Mulroney would have us believe is that it is corporations like Inco and Dow Chemical which are going to be the vanguard of sustainable development. Corporations, by their very nature, are ecologically and socially irresponsible. Go into any McDonald's and complain about their wasteful packaging. The employee (who after all, only "works" there) will refer you to the manager. The manager will

restructuring of our economic, political and social institutions -- a revolution, if you will.

We need to pay attention to those movements, here in Canada, and around the world where peoples' struggle to preserve their distinct cultures is linked to the struggle to preserve specific ecosystems and use them in a renewable and sustainable fashion. There is a growing convergence of these movements worldwide; some people have called it the emergence of the "planetariat". It is a movement to preserve natural, cultural and spiritual resources, and we need to be part of it. □

Jennifer Sanders

# Witness for Peace

The following are two letters written by Carolyn Mow, ■ Peace Brigades volunteer, to her friends back home while she was in El Salvador to observe the recent "elections" (in March).

Peace Brigades International was established in 1981 by veterans of the World Peace Brigade and other social activists. They are active in Central America, the Middle East and will soon be in South Africa. The role of their volunteers in Central America is to accompany members of grassroots movements and observe events, without intervening. Their hope is that their presence will protect people otherwise in danger for their lives, and, despite the ongoing political violence in Central America, no one has been killed or "disappeared" while accompanied by a Peace Brigades volunteer.

For more information on the Peace Brigades write to:

Peace Brigades International  
4722 Baltimore Av.  
Philadelphia, PA 19143 USA

Peace Brigades International  
345 Adelaide St. W. Suite 606  
Toronto, Ontario, M5W 1R5 Canada

March 9, 1989

Dear Friends,

Sitting in the CRIPDES office today, in the middle of a mid-morning chat with a woman I have gotten to know a little bit when she comes into town from the repopulated community Los Ranchos, she suddenly started to tell me the story of the morning in 1980 when soldiers came and chopped her 58 year old mother to pieces with a machete. I wonder how many of the people I see here could tell me a similar story ... I haven't quite figured out how to process information like that -- it just really blows me away.

Just after I last wrote you, the situation here felt even tenser to me for awhile, but then it relaxed alot, at least in my perception. Now, well, we're just waiting to see what will happen in the next ten days -- feeling tenser again.

I have to start by telling you what happened to me just after I finished that letter. You may remember that I was typing it in the UNTS office. I left the office early the next morning (too early for a Sunday, evidently). When I got to the corner of the street, 2 police cars pulled up, 4 police got out (with their machine guns), searched me in great detail and asked alot of questions. I was holding my breath when they started ■ look at the letter. I had it folded in thirds. They opened the top third, exposing the first paragraph, which just said "hi how are you", etc. If they had opened it up more and looked at the next paragraph, they would have seen UNTS and COMADRES typed in capital letters, and I'm pretty sure they would have arrested me. As it was, they let me go. I felt lucky, but was on the shakey side for the rest of the day.

That Wednesday at 4:15am the FENASTRAS (National Trade Union Federation) office was dynamited in the same way the UNTS office had been. Again, there was alot of physical damage but no one hurt. Later that same day, when someone in the CRIPDES office was talking on the phone, a third person came on the line and said they had better be careful or they would be bombed too. So all the offices we work in put up piles of

sandbags, inside and out on the street, and San Salvador began to look even more like a war zone.

(By the way, I want ■ thank all of you who responded to the bombing of the UNTS office. The stronger the international response, the safer we are here.)

The FENASTRAS demonstration in protest of the bombing was pretty intense. They burned 10 vehicles, and broke shop windows. Then came the tanks, helicopters and riot police. It sounds like it came close to breaking out into street fighting, but somehow things calmed down before evening and no one was hurt. We on the PBI team had some pretty heavy discussions about how we should relate to the situation if that was the direction things were going to go.

But fortunately things changed. On Feb. 26 (just 4 days later), President Duarte made his own peace proposal, and the armed forces announced a unilateral cease-fire. Even though Duarte didn't offer much in his proposal, and the armed forces did not stop their military operations, still the atmosphere of the country somehow changed, as if the possibility of a negotiated solution were suddenly open again. The FMLN announcement that they wouldn't use any more car bombs also did alot to lower the level of tension in the city.

That hopeful mood was very strongly expressed in the second "Great Peace March" called by the Permanent Committee for the National Debate on Saturday, March 4. Almost everyone on the team went, and I think that everyone I know in El Salvador was there. It was by far the biggest event I've been to here. It reminded me in some ways of big peace marches at home. All the contingents lined up -- the churches first, then the universities, human rights groups, people from repopulated and marginal communities, and unions. One thing that I liked alot is the way they line up here, with two long columns on the sides of the street, and the banners in the middle. All the slogans were focussed on the desire for a negotiated settlement to the conflict, and the spirit was wonderful. The churches brought beautiful palms covered with flowers. Marchers encouraged people in the market and on the street to join in the struggle for peace. It was a very long march rout through the city, and we all got quite sunburned.

Sometimes I have been so caught up in thinking about bombs, etc., that I have forgotten about the other great violence here, the violence of poverty. In my last letter, I wrote about accompanying a land takeover in a marginal community in San Salvador. The organizers of that takeover asked us to come with them to spend ■ night in the community. I felt very lucky to be able to go, ■ be reminded of the reality in which most people here live. We visited a woman living with her 7 children in a structure that had a wooden frame, plastic sides, and a dirt floor. They literally had nothing, and told us they had been eating only tortillas and tomatoes. It was very interesting to hear what the people there had to say about the need for political change, and the importance of helping other people see that they don't have to settle for a life of poverty, that they can do something to change the circumstances of their life.

While we were there, one of the first meetings of the new community took

place. They discussed the role of the newly elected community leadership, encouraging the others to participate and not leave everything ■ the leaders. They talked about the fact that they had been able to get water for the community, and decided that electricity would be their next priority. They spent quite a while talking about the

get out of the city a couple of times. On Feb. 22, the day when all the wild stuff happened with FENASTRAS, I and three other PBI volunteers went to Las Hojas, a cooperative of ANIS (National Association for Indigenous People of El Salvador), in the department of Sonsonate, to attend the commemoration ceremony



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pros and cons of having a separate electrical outlet for each family. UNADES, the group that is organizing the community, talked about first aid workshops they were giving, and literacy classes, encouraging people to attend. They also discussed the relationship between the community and the overall struggle for social change going on in the country.

I have been lucky enough to be able to

on the sixth anniversary of a massacre in which 74 men were killed by the military. The ceremony was an interesting combination. It began with a service led by a pastor from the Lutheran church. That was followed by a talk by the chief of the Native People of El Salvador, in which he said that it was the first time he had ever taken communion, explaining that he wanted to share in that ritual because he

felt that the Lutheran church respected the indigenous community and their beliefs. The perspective of ANIS, and its way of relating to the government and military are somewhat unique, although they are part of the same general movement as the other groups we work with. Like Lutheran Bishop Medardo Gomez, they keep the lines of communication open, and their interactions are based on an underlying sense of nonviolence.

International connections are very important to ANIS, and they asked us to introduce ourselves. It felt very good to be there, as representatives of international concern and remembrance of what happened to them. We walked to the site where the massacre took place, down by the river a little way away from the houses in the community. Crosses still mark the places where people fell, and while we were there people shared their memories of what had happened that day. It was a very moving experience for me, especially hearing from the women who lost husbands, sons, brothers. It's hard to imagine what it would be like to lose so many people in a community of only a few hundred. I was a little overwhelmed.

Last Sunday I had the great good fortune to visit the community of Buena Vista, "Good View", so named for very obvious reasons -- a view of the ocean, green hills. It takes at least an hour to walk there from the bus -- such a joy after being in the city for so long! Buena Vista is an internal repopulation. About 400 people moved there less than a year ago from a large refugee camp. It is different from other repopulated communities in that it is not in a conflict zone (which is why we could go fairly easily). It is not a place where people lived before they were displaced by the war, and the people who are there now come from a variety of places. I was really impressed by what they have created from nothing in less than a year -- houses, fields of crops, a mill, crop storage. And even more than their physical accomplishments, I was impressed by their sense of community. We had received a donation of \$50 to buy shoes for children. When we talked to a community leader about it, the first thing he did was start calculating to see if it would be enough to buy shoes for all the children in the community. It was clear

large group had attended the big peace march in the city the day before. They are clearly very anxious for the war to be over, but also want to see that all the years of struggle have led to some concrete social changes. They seemed very clear about not voting in the upcoming elections, as pretty much everyone I know here is. People in the repopulations couldn't vote if they wanted to since most of them don't have documents.

On March 8 I got to go to another high-spirited event, the international women's day march. Its atmosphere seemed different from other events here in a somewhat similar way that women's events are special at home. We went to the legislative assembly because the women wanted to meet with legislators to find out what's going on with the new family code, which the government has been very closed-mouthed about. The visual image of women hanging colorful banners on a high fence with razor wire on the top and riot police behind was vaguely reminiscent of the Seneca Army Depot. The themes of the march were partly specific women's issues, but, as with almost any activity in El Salvador these days, the major focus was supporting the FMLN peace proposal, demanding a negotiated solution to the conflict, and calling on people to boycott the March 19 elections. People talked especially about how the war affects women. Another major theme in women's groups is forced military recruitment. A favourite slogan is "If they want war, let the sons of the rich fight it."

After the demonstration at the legislative assembly, a smaller group went to the hospital, where a man who had been captured and badly injured was supposed to be released. He didn't get released while we were there, but was later that day. So many people here are prisoners in the hospital -- I can hardly imagine anything worse! One interesting thing that happened while we were waiting was that some soldiers started to come near where we were, and the person who was talking on the megaphone began to address them, asking them to keep their distance and respect people's right to peacefully gather. That was on the funny side for me because they had occupied the street, blocking traffic as demonstrations often

I wasn't sure if that had been arranged or not.

The team is big now, with 10 women and 3 men. It's great in terms of meaning that we have time to do more interesting work, but the house feels a little crowded sometimes. I continue to like my teammates a lot though, and am enjoying getting to know them better. My big excitement is that I found "Ithaca in El Salvador" -- natural pools a little outside the city. I've only been once, but I continue to hope it will somehow fit into my schedule again someday.

The FMLN has called for a transportation strike (paro) starting on the 15th, so we've been trying to make some special plans, stocking up on food, thinking that some of us may not leave the house for several days, and others will just stay put in offices where we work. We really don't know exactly what to expect. It seems clear to me that the movement to boycott the elections gained a lot of support because of everything that happened with the FMLN proposal, but I don't know if people are planning to do things to actually try to keep the election from happening. ARENA is most likely to win, but probably not on the first ballot. The thing that is most upsetting to me is that our friends from the repopulated communities are really scared -- scared they will be bombed mostly, I think. And I feel really helpless about that -- we can't even

them that it looked really bad to not let them through, that it showed that El Salvador is not really a democracy, etc., appealing to them in fairly positive ways, I thought. But the authorities there simply insisted that it wasn't their decision. The idea was that if there were any problems we would camp out there at the border to put pressure on the authorities to let them cross. But there were a lot of people in the group who weren't prepared to stay, with lots of young children who were very tired, etc. Leaders of the group felt it was too dangerous to send only some people back, so we all went back to the capital that night (second mistake!). People tried to get back to the border the next day, but were turned back by a military roadblock.

In the end, after spending a very uncomfortable 10 days camped out at the border, the members of the caravan turned back, many needing to go home, others planning to try to enter the country by air. The first official excuse for not letting them through was that no foreigners would enter the country before the elections (obviously not true), the second was that it would be dangerous for them to enter during the paro (transport strike) -- which started two days after their arrival, and finally it was simply stated that they were "suspicious". Arg! From the PBI house, we were in touch with them by phone during the paro, and afterwards 2 of our volunteers went with Sal-



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go out there.

Personally, I'm also a little worried about my visa scene. My time is up on the 20th, and I haven't figured out what to do.

March 20, 1989

Dear Friends,

Seeing the local press coverage of yesterday's elections, I feel like they are talking about another country -- what they describe has so little relationship to what I have experienced in the last few days. I imagine that the international coverage is similar.

Last week began with the expected arrival of a caravan of 45 people from the U.S. and Canada bringing \$3 million in material aid for people displaced by the war and the '86 earthquake. On Monday, I and 2 other PBI volunteers accompanied a group of 5 buses going from San Salvador to meet them at the Guatemalan border. After waiting all afternoon, we were finally able to greet them as they crossed the bridge into El Salvador at 5pm. Unfortunately, that was just the beginning. We went to the other side of immigration to wait for them (first mistake). When all their papers were ready, cars searched, etc. a call came from San Salvador saying not to let them through. The Salvadorans argued with the border officials for awhile, trying to convince

vadorans back up to the border, which was fortunate because the Salvadorans weren't allowed to go in and talk to the people in the caravan, whereas we as foreigners were.

The paro was a pretty intense time for the PBI team, as I guess it was for everyone here. We decided that instead of doing our regular office presences on the basis of 2 shifts/day, we would send 2 people to each place to stay from Wednesday to Monday morning. (This was because we were afraid that the streets would be highly militarized and it would be especially risky to come and go from the offices we work in.) I was one of the people who stayed in our house to receive phone calls and respond to special requests for presences. We thought we might be bored, but quite the contrary. We started out being busy doing support work for the caravan stuck at the border, and then on Friday the scene in San Salvador started to heat up. We were without light and water for most of the time, so that somehow contributed to the atmosphere of the time.

Calls we received on Friday informed us that: one of the main leaders of the trade union federation FENASTRAS had been captured by the national police, the office of CODEFAM (a human rights organization) had also been captured, that the military were stopping and searching



Jennifer Sanders

that he wouldn't go out and buy shoes until he could get them for everyone. That's just a small example of their cooperative way of living. Even though they are not technically in a conflict zone, they have still suffered harassment from the military. While we were walking in, we met a woman on her way out. Her first question was whether or not there was a military roadblock that day. People in the community seemed to be very aware of the political situation in the country. A

do here, and they get away with it, at least in an immediate sense. The people have a lot more control of the streets here than we do on the States, as the result of a lot of struggle, of course. The end of the demonstration showed where the danger lies here. Everyone lined up together and marched down the street for about a block. Then at the corner everyone took off running. When we got to the corner we saw that they had all disappeared in a matter of minutes on some public buses.

# CANADA EXPORTING DANGER:

This article, by Barbara J. MacQuarrie, was compiled from the following San Salvador newspapers: Prensa Graphica, Diario de Hoy and El Mundo.

On March 6, 1989, news of a nuclear accident in a San Salvador laboratory began to appear in the national press. The accident occurred one month earlier on February 5, 1989.

DELMED is a factory which produces surgical devices and intravenous solutions. One section of the firm sterilizes material using the radiation of cobalt 60 "pencils". The radiation equipment was built by Nordion International, Inc., a Canadian company. The equipment was installed in 1975.

DELMED says this is its first nuclear accident. It claims that "the sterilization plant has security controls which conform to the strictest demands of the Canadian Government and the International Atomic Energy Commission. DELMED stated that, "Radiation leaks cannot occur. The plant operators receive the necessary training and know the dangers of mishandling the equipment."

Despite these claims, an accident *did* occur and at least three DELMED workers were seriously affected. The facts are coming out piecemeal, in press statements given by company officers and by Dr. Melmo Roger Toruno, the doctor who first attended the victims.

The cobalt 60 pencils, which emit radiation, are manipulated by a mechanical robot. When not in use the pencils are immersed in a pool of water to prevent the escape of radiation. The plant has a security system of automatically locking doors which control the entry of personnel into the radiation chamber when the pencils are exposed.

Ricardo Roque Tobar worked as a mechanic and an electrician in that section of the factory. On February 5, at 1:30 a. m., while the pencils were exposed, Roque Tobar entered the radiation chamber by de-activating the automatic security system, which functions electrically. Presumably he meant to repair a mechanical fault in the robot which handles the cobalt pencils.

He called in two other plant employees, Jose Stanley Vasconcelos and Jose Luis Martinez, to help him. Both men entered the radiation chamber with him, resulting in the exposure of all three to high doses of radiation.

Roque Tobar didn't seek medical attention until several days after the accident. At first, he was diagnosed as having food poisoning. As his health quickly deteriorated, a more accurate diagnosis was made. Dr. Helmo Roger Toruno, a cancer specialist and radiologist who attended Roque Tobar, said that he had received a dose of 400 RADS and that 100% of his body suffered burns. The doctor has stated that he already considers Roque Tobar "a corpse".

Two days after Roque Tobar was hospitalized, the other two workers presented themselves as patients. Jose Luis Martinez and Roque Tobar were transferred immediately to Los Angeles del Pedregal Hospital in Mexico. Stanley Vasconcelos, whose case appeared less serious, was first treated at Rosales Hospital in San Salvador.

Soon after, Stanley Vasconcelos was transferred to the hospital in Mexico. Family members accompanied the victims to Mexico so they can be on hand to donate bone marrow for transplants. The same treatment was used in the U. S. S. R. on the Chernobyl nuclear victims.

Why did the three workers expose themselves to radiation by entering the chamber when the cobalt 60 pencils were not submerged? That, say company officials, "is the million dollar question." Dr. Toruno has an answer for them. Roque Tobar told him he had never been told what the substance he was working with was, nor the risks it involved.

Engineer Ramon Portillo, head of the University of El Salvador (UES) Nuclear Energy Laboratory, believes Roque Tobar's statement: "We believe the workers of the factory in question were totally unaware of the implications of working with radioactive materials. If they had known they would never have acted as they did."

In all of its press statements DELMED blames the workers: "Only through negligence, or being in an abnormal state, would an operator expose himself directly to radioactivity." DELMED director of marketing, Julio Adalberto Amaya, insists that, "infallible security measures have been established by the company."

The company has not paid the victims' medical costs, and are not paying compensation to either the victims of

their families. The company says the Salvadoran Institute for Social Security (ISSS) should assume this responsibility. The ISSS is in fact paying all medical costs, including travel expenses to Mexico for the three victims and their relatives who are donating bone marrow.

The ISSS would recover these costs from DELMED if "it is found that the company is violating norms of security and hygiene." No mention has been made of forming a commission to investigate DELMED's responsibility in the accident.

It has not been made clear how long the entry to the chamber remained open when the three workers entered, allowing radiation to escape into the rest of the factory and out into the neighborhood. When concern about this was expressed, a Ministry of Health official was quick to respond: "There is no danger. . . . This type of radiation becomes diluted over distance and after 75 centimeters is imperceptible."

Experts disagree. Dr. Toruno, referring to the seriousness of the case, said the problem remains of knowing how many more people in the factory were exposed. Toruno recommended that the factory be shut down immediately because it is not known what is happening there, nor what will happen to the people living nearby. He cannot understand why, despite the danger, the factory continues to operate.

Dr. Ricardo Navarro, a UES engineer, echoes these concerns: "Radiation can affect thousands of Salvadorans, without it being realized immediately. Many of those affected will contract cancer and other fatal diseases."

People living near the factory are worried about the accident. They've asked the Minister of Health, Benjamin Valdes, to inform them of the possible effects the radiation could have on them. Valdez answered that there was no possibility other persons had been affected because the plant was closed and the area quarantined as soon as the accident happened. Whether or not that is true, the victims did not receive medical care until days after the incident, and the accident was kept secret for several weeks.

Factory neighbours were critical of this delay: "Only in totalitarian regimes like Russia do authorities try to hide what has happened. In democratic countries like the U. S. people are immediately informed and instructed in the precautions they should take to protect themselves."

In a further attempt to reassure neighbours, Dr. Valdez said that experts from other countries were investigating and would make recommendations. DELMED officers report that Canadian technicians were called in immediately after the accident -- a standard procedure whenever there is a problem since the plant was manufactured in Canada. On March 8, as news of the accident was becoming public, emergency experts from the Atomic Energy Center in Washington came to DELMED to investigate.

Both the UES and Dr. Toruno charged the Minister of Health with irresponsibility in dealing with the nuclear accident. Dr. Toruno stated that he contacted both the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Labour when he became aware of what happened. Neither, he reports, responded to his urgent call. Proof of that is the fact that the factory is still operating as though the problem has been resolved. Toruno also said he was surprised by how casually the Minister of Health has treated this serious accident.

UES sources condemned Minister of Health Valdez for keeping news of the accident secret for so long and for failing to inform people who might be at risk.

Other private companies, the national electrical company, and hospitals in El Salvador also work with radioactive materials. There are no regulations in effect to govern the use of these dangerous substances. Valdez says radioactive substances began entering the country many years ago when the 1930 Health Code was still in effect. The Code has few references to the use of radioactive materials.

Both Dr. Toruno and the UES, who have been most outspoken about the accident, recommend that state controls governing the use of radioactive materials be implemented. The UES Nuclear Energy Laboratory has offered to help establish regulations, noting that it has the personnel and equipment needed to carry out this work.

Banning the use of radioactive substances in El Salvador has yet to be considered. □

everyone entering or leaving the UNTS office, and that the attorney general had announced that the press was forbidden to air or publish anything (including paid ads) that urged people not to vote.

On Saturday afternoon I and another PBI volunteer went to a demonstration at the main plaza in protest of the increase in repression at election time. We were asked to spend the night in the national cathedral with about 40 members of CRIPDES (Christian Committee for the Displaced) and CO DEF AM who had decided to occupy it for the night in protest of everything that was happening. We had not come prepared to be out for the night (with sweaters, for example), so it was a little uncomfortable, but it felt very good to me to be there with those brave people. There were a lot of police outside early in the evening but they never did anything and the night was fairly calm. The group was quite well organized, beginning with a meeting in which they made a list of everyone who was there (just in case), and discussed plans for food, bathrooms, keeping watch, and cleanup.

In the morning, the first thing we did was put on a portable radio to listen to the news -- which was that 3 journalists had been killed by the military during the night. People were pretty blown away -- many of them knew the 2 Salvadorans personally. (I later found out that a photographer friend of mine was actually with the Dutch cameraman who was killed, which makes that feel very close to home.)

That morning (election day), the group left the cathedral at 8am and were joined by others for a small demonstration. I felt really nervous for them -- less than 50 people marching through a very militarized city, blocking the roads and asking people not to vote. All went smoothly enough until the very end. Just as we were getting ready to jump into 2 trucks and get out of there, a car broke through the road blockade and tried to run some people over. People responded by attacking the car, and one young man cut his hand right in the vein so that it bled furiously. We quickly piled into the trucks to go to the CRIPDES office. But too many people in a truck going too fast around the corners caused something to break and some people fell out. Fortunately they weren't hurt badly, but it was clear that some people would have to walk the rest of the way, regardless of the police cars just behind us. The other PBI volunteer I was with got off to walk with them, forgetting that she was covered with blood from the injured man. Everyone made it back to the office, but we were something of a nervous wreck at this point. For some reason it hit me particularly strongly at that moment that some of the young people I know here, given their commitment to continue to struggle, are not likely to live long.

Election night, watching the TV reports reminded me vaguely of how I felt after Reagan's electoral victories -- only worse. Everyone is kind of waiting to see what things will be like now -- waiting with a certain amount of fear.

We had a breakfast meeting with Humberto Centeno from the UNTS a couple of days after the election, in which he shared their analysis of the post-election situation with us. It was not as depressing as I expected. They think that the somewhat more 'moderate' side of A RENA will keep them from doing anything really drastic right away. Things will change for the worse but it will happen gradually and they will increase repression in ways they can justify as 'legal'. He also talked about the opportunities for broadening the popular move-

continued on next page

# THEATRE OF LIFE THEATRE OF WAR:

## Struggling against Militarization in India

by Paul Routledge

On the east coast of India, abreast of the Bay of Bengal, a small area of land in the far north of Orissa state has become the stage for a life or death struggle waged by peasant farmer and fisher-folk against the central government and military establishment of India. In the Baliapal and Bhograi village areas of Baleshwar district, the inhabitants of 54 villages (approximately 45,000 people, according to government estimates) are facing forced eviction and relocation from their homes and lands to make way for the government's National Testing Range -- a site for the testing and launching of satellites, rockets and long-range missiles.

Faced with eviction from the land which has nurtured them, the villagers have formed a people's movement which has engaged in a three year struggle of resistance against the State's plans to remove them. The conflict is taking place against a backdrop of increasing militarization by the Indian State -- a process that not only threatens the local culture and prosperity of the people of Baliapal but also portends

ment, to include some trade unions that were supporters of the Christian Democrats but are unlikely to support an ARENA government.

'So, I don't know exactly what to think is going to happen. The first week has not been too promising, with a continuation of the military cordon around the UNTS office. When I spent a day there this week I got pretty bummed out -- leaving with 3 people from there, the soldiers looked in my bag briefly, but thoroughly frisked and questioned the people I was with. It was like going through an almost arrest every time you go to the office. Yuck.

On the 24th, I went to the COM-ADRES event commemorating the assassination of Archbishop Romero. It was a nice march, with the COMADRES, a bunch of people from a repopulated community in the countryside, and people from the San Salvador neighbourhood where the march started. We ended up at the cathedral, where we interrupted a mass to go to the tomb -- leave some flowers. I was very moved to see some of the people I was with crying while we were at the tomb. It made me wonder what relationship they had to him during his life.

One little personal update is that I went to immigration on the 15th (to get it over-with before the paro started) and got a 90 day extension. It is a great relief for me to have that settled, but I'm not very happy with the fact that I went a somewhat desperate route and paid a high 'unofficial' price to get it.

So, that's my update for the moment. I continue to think about you all alot, am eternally grateful for the letters and support you send, and always anxious for more news.

Love, Carolyn

dangerous implications for the whole region.

### The land and its people

Named 'the granary of Orissa,' the Baliapal-Bhograi area contains some of the most fertile agricultural land in India, producing a variety of crops such as coconuts, groundnuts, oilseeds, cashews and paddy. The betel leaf orchards play the most important economic role, however, the richness of the soil enabling both Jagannath and Banarasi varieties of betel to be grown and exported. Proximity to the coast and the Subarnarekha River also enable people to earn a living through sea and inland fishing and gives rise to various cottage industries such as the manufacture of coil rope, bamboo baskets, mats and mattresses and haulier machinery as well as salt factories and oil extraction mills. According to a recent survey<sup>1</sup>, the aforementioned activities, including orchards, homestead land and government land under cultivation, are valued at approximately Rs 450 crores (US \$360 million). Taken together, the total cost of the lands, properties, crops, cottage industries and temples that are threatened by the Testing Range amount to Rs 712 crores (US \$548 million).<sup>2</sup>

One of the most densely populated poor areas in Orissa, Bhograi (with 600 persons per square kilometer) and Baliapal (with 397 per square kilometer) are far in excess of the state average of 169 persons per square kilometer.<sup>3</sup> Approximately 35% of the village populations comprise wealthy landowners and middle peasants, the average plot size varying between five and ten acres for middle peasants and thirty to thirty-five acres for wealthy landowners. The other 65% of the population consists of agricultural laborers, sharecroppers, fisher-folk (*Dhivars*) and tribals. The nature of the crops grown in the area often necessitates the entire family being involved in the agricultural process. For example, during betel and paddy cultivation, all members of the family are employed plucking, cutting and bundling the betel leaves and husking the paddy.

Because the prosperous landowners

can offer wages up to Rs 30 per day (US \$2.35) -- the highest for any agricultural laborers anywhere in India -- approximately 200,000 seasonal laborers from Mayurbhanj and Midnapore districts in West Bengal migrate to Baliapal-Bhograi for employment. Another 100,000 people obtain indirect employment from the cash crop economy, while 30,000 fishermen from Baliapal-Bhograi and the adjacent areas work along the Subarnarekha River and the coast.<sup>4</sup> Although some of the village populations are in favor of the Test Range -- most notably absentee landlords and some of the wealthy landowners who support the Congress government party -- the majority see the project as a direct threat to their livelihoods and culture.

### The Militarization of Orissa

The original decision to set up a *National Testing Range* (NTR) was made in 1979 by the Janata Government and was pursued by the *Congress* government when it came to power in 1980 [*Congress is the dominant party in India* -- ed.]. In 1985 the Congress announced that the Range would be located in the Baliapal area, costing Rs 3,000 crores (US \$2,310 million) covering 160 square kilometers and necessitating the evacuation of 70-100,000 people from approximately 130 villages. Although the government gave its formal and final approval to the siting of the Range on May 21, 1986, by August 6, 1986, due criticism of the choice of site because of its dense population and agricultural fertility, the size of the Range was reduced to 102 square kilometers (68 sq. km. for the range and 34 sq. km. for a safety zone). This revised project would cost Rs 1,100 crores (US \$840 million) and affect 45,000 people in 54 villages (41 in Baliapal, 13 in Bhograi).<sup>5</sup> According to the government, the people in the 13 villages that comprise the 34 sq. km. safety zone would be allowed to continue cultivating the land, although all the villages must be evacuated. The official figures, however, do not take into account those people who receive seasonal and indirect employment from the area, nor the fisherman displaced by

the Range, which, according to B.P. Sahu, the Assistant Director of Fisheries for the area, will include 1,500 families living in 27 fishing villages.<sup>6</sup>

When considering the purpose of the Range and its long term requirements, it becomes difficult to imagine that the requisition of land will remain at the official figure of 102 sq. km. According to Brigadier R.S. Kannan, Area Commandant for the entire Baleshwar district, the NTR should properly be called the National Range, indicating that the Range is to be more than a testing site, contrary to what initial government statements have indicated. Indeed, V.S. Arunachalam, scientific advisor to the



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Defense Ministry, stated on May 21, 1986 that "the nation's premier missile test range would also be used for launching missiles and space vehicles." The functions officially listed for the Range include the "practice firing of long-range missiles."<sup>7</sup> On July 31, 1985, the Chief Minister of Orissa announced that the Range would fire missiles with a range of up to 5,000 km; while the Indian Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi has stated, "Our Polar satellite launch vehicle project will be very much more feasible from this site, as will our surface-to-air and other tactical missile projects."<sup>8</sup>

According to Brigadier Kaannan, the NTR is part of a wider integrated military system that is being developed within Orissa. Military sites include an "Interim Test Range," the Balasore Rocket Station and Proof and Experimental Establishment at Charbatia and Rasgobindpur, naval bases at Chilka Lake and Gobalpur, an ammunitions industry at Saintala, and a MIG fighter assembly plant at Sunabeda. Increasingly, the local economy of Baliapal will be tailored to service the needs of armed personnel located there, leading to price increases, an influx of hitherto unnecessary consumer products, alien social

of Orissa and Baliapal in particular, there is increasing suspicion that the Range will ultimately be used to deploy missiles with nuclear capability. Notes Mohan Ram, "India is a threshold nuclear power, having carried out a 'peaceful nuclear explosion' while vowing not to use nuclear energy for military ends... India thus retains the nuclear bomb option but lacks a delivery system. Skeptics argue that a missile capable of delivering a conventional warhead can be used for a nuclear warhead if need be."<sup>12</sup> Certainly a missile range of the sophistication and magnitude of that planned for Baliapal would be necessary for the deployment of nuclear warheads. Such a development portends serious consequences for the stability of the region, especially given the belligerent relationship between India and Pakistan. Alternately accusing the other of being on the verge of developing nuclear weapons, both countries have a ready rationale for pressuring their own arms build-up. Indeed, rarely a day goes by without the Indian press announcing a new revelation about the new arms technology that Pakistan is acquiring. This scenario is being played out against a backdrop of superpower rivalry; Pakistan receives

village on the Baliapal outskirts. Nine industries (including oil, leather, spinning and tool manufacture) will be set up to provide direct and indirect job opportunities for one member of each displaced family, providing a total of 4,000 jobs. The Range will provide another 470 jobs.<sup>15</sup>

Several factors, however, draw into question the feasibility and supposed "good intent" of the government scheme. First, according to a government announcement on September 4, 1986, 11,000 acres out of a total of 21,000 acres required for the Range is considered government land which has been "encroached" upon for many years by local farmers.<sup>16</sup> The government has announced that it will evict all encroachers without compensation for the land and will only compensate for any structures on the land and for the standing crop; if evictions occur after harvesting, there will, of course be no standing crop to compensate for. Secondly, given the population density of Baleshwar district (357 persons per sq. km)<sup>17</sup>, it appears improbable that even the official estimate of 45,000 people can be resettled within 10-15 km of their present residences (unofficial, i.e. non-governmental, estimates of the

keepers. Also, since the government plans to create only one job for each family, the other family members will be left without any alternative employment.

For the people of the Baliapal-Bhograi area, whose livelihood and culture are intimately bound to the land and the river/coastal waters, the severance of their working relationship with the natural environment and the community culture that has developed as a result of this relationship amounts to cultural ethnocide -- a process that is occurring throughout India as local culture is destroyed in the process of development.<sup>19</sup>

Finally, the Orissa state government's record on implementation of rehabilitation and compensation plans in the past sets a grim precedent for the present scheme. The Chief Minister of Orissa stated in 1986 in the Orissa State Assembly that, of the 30,000 people made homeless by the Rengali Dam project eleven years ago, 22,000 have yet to be rehabilitated.<sup>20</sup> Also, the survivors of the village of Badakhanpur that was washed away by a flash flood of the Subarnarekha River in October 1985 have yet to be rehabilitated.<sup>21</sup>

The response of the people of



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values (of the military) and the inexorable movement from civilian to military rule.<sup>9</sup> Within the context of increasing militarization and given Defense Ministry acknowledgements that 400 sq. km. will eventually be required for the NTR, it is difficult to accept government assurances that the site's present size of 102 sq. km. will be a finite land requirement and that more people will not have to be evicted in the future.

A dispute also exists over the areal extent of the safety zone -- currently planned at 34 sq. km. According to some sources, a safety zone of 2,500 sq. km. is necessary given that the shock waves from a missile launch can be felt up to 100 km. away from the site.<sup>10</sup> Such a zone would include the Baliapal-Bhograi and Basta village blocks and the Bay of Begal coastline up to Kanthi and Junpur in West Bengal's Midnapore district. The concern over the size of the safety zone may well have been aroused by the launching of a 39 ton ASLV rocket from Sriharikota on March 24, 1987, which, with a projected course of 400 km, rose only 12 km into the sky before falling into the Bay of Bengal.<sup>11</sup>

While these developments are disturbing enough to the lives of the people

arms from the United States, and India conducts most of its arms trade with the Soviet Union.<sup>13</sup>

Within the context of the State undergoing increasing militarization -- the 1987-88 budget allots Rs 13,000 crores (US \$10 billion) to defense expenditure (about 20% of the total central government expenditure)<sup>14</sup> -- the state of Orissa, and particularly the Baliapal area, is being developed as one of India's prime theaters of war operations.

#### Rehabilitation as Cultural Dislocation

In order to offset popular resistance to the location of the NTR, the government has proposed an elaborate Rehabilitation and Compensation plan worth Rs 127 crores (US \$100 million). Briefly, the plan intends to relocate the people of Baliapal into model villages up to 15 km away from their present homes, each family receiving a house costing Rs 15,000 (US \$1,140) and built on 10 decimals of land (one-tenth of an acre). The model villages will contain schools, hospitals, community centers, post offices, etc., and, as if to assure people of its good intentions, the government is constructing one such

number of evictees is closer to 100,000 people).<sup>18</sup>

Concerning the establishment of industrial complexes, certain economic and cultural factors need to be considered. First, evictions are planned before the new factories are due to be completed, hence forcing evictees to seek work elsewhere until employment at the factories becomes available. Second, there is no guarantee that the evictees will be able to perform the industrial jobs -- only those who obtain training at special Industrial Training Institutes to be set up in the area will be eligible for such employment. Past experience of development projects in India has consistently shown that local people do not eventually obtain the bulk of the new jobs created, except those that are insecure, temporary and contractual. Third, according to the Orissa state government (which will implement the plan) it will not be possible to rehabilitate the families by giving them cultivable land, owing to the shortage of agricultural land.

Hence the traditional farmers and fisher-folk will be forced to apply for work in the factories, becoming skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled factory workers or employed artisans and shop-

Baliapal-Bhograi has been one of total resistance to the missile range and the rehabilitation scheme. As Sashadhar Pradhan, the Baliapal *panchayat samiti* (village committee) chairman and local Janata Party leader has stated, "the villagers will not vacate their land whatever the compensation."<sup>22</sup>

#### The People's Movement: "We Shall Face Bullets But Not Surrender The Land"

The resistance to the NTR can be dated back to the 1985 government announcement, whereupon the *Uttar Balasore Khepasatra Ghatti Pratirodha Committee* (North Balasore Testing Range Resistance Committee) was formed. The Committee was comprised of local political party representatives from the Baliapal-Bhograi villages and cut across political and ideological lines. An "outside front" comprised of communist and socialist political parties, trade unions, student groups and writers' forums was also formed to lend support to the resistance movement. Because the Resistance Committee only consisted of political party representatives, the various "landless" groups

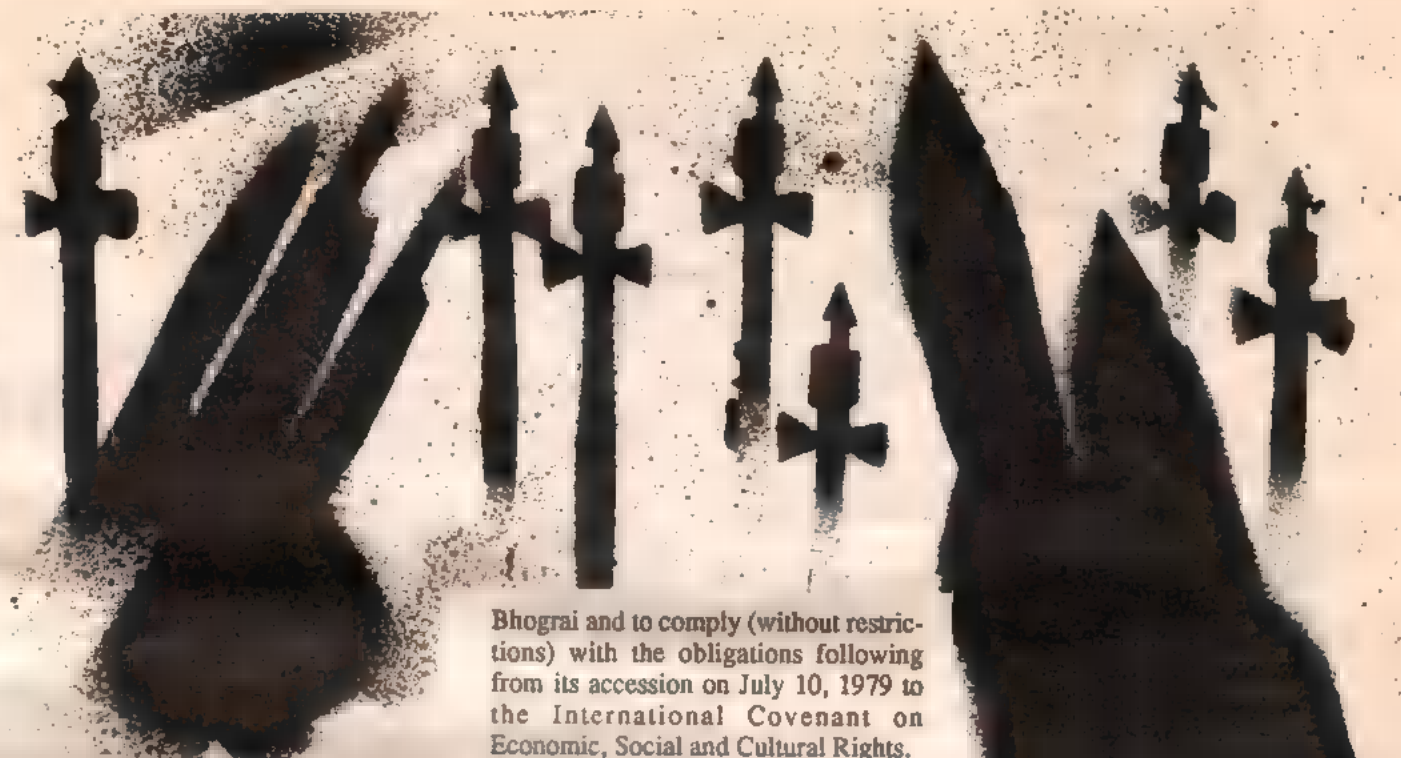
(agricultural laborers, sharecroppers, tribals), the fisher-folk and some of the middle peasants formed their own resistance movement aided by activists from the *Unity Committee of Communist Revolutionaries of India (Marxist-Leninist)* in Baliapal block, and activists from the *Institute for the Motivation of Self Employment* in Bhograi block.

The villagers have adopted a non-violent, non-cooperation approach to their protest, drawing inspiration from the area's historical involvement in the non-cooperation, civil disobedience and *Quit India* movements. A "Janata Curfew" (people's curfew) has been set up whereby government officials and representatives are prevented from entering the area. To enforce this, checkpoints have been set up barricading the approach roads ■ the Baliapal-Bhograi area with bamboo and trenches dug in order to stop government vehicles. At the Kalipadra Naighati checkpoint, for example, 500 villagers constantly form the barricade. Above the barricades ■ sign clearly states in Oriya, "Land is Ours, Sea is Ours, Government Officials Go Back." In order to warn the village of approaching vehicles the people staffing the barricades blow conch shells and beat *Thalis* (metal plates), thereby quickly drawing thousands of villagers to the barricade to form human road blocks.<sup>23</sup>

Indeed, a *Maran Sena* (Death or Suicide Squad) of 5,000 people comprised of women, children and men has been created to form these road blocks in case of emergencies, their slogan being, "After killing me the Range will be established on my corpse."

The area has been effectively sealed off for 30 months, the villagers also refusing to pay taxes — according to revenue officers, only 2-3% of the government dues were collected from Baliapal in 1986-87<sup>24</sup> — and holding people's courts to settle area disputes, thus not bringing any cases before the regular revenue, civil or criminal courts. In concert with these forms of resistance, the movement has also held *bandhs* (strikes), printed posters, held mass public meetings, conducted demonstrations and painted wall slogans. For example, in June 1986, 10,000 people demonstrated at the Balasore Collectorate demanding the relocation of the base.

The response of the government to this resistance has taken several forms. First, they set up an unofficial economic blockade of the area whereby essential commodities such as kerosene and sugar were no longer made available to the villages. The commodities were available, however, at unsubsidized prices a distance of 10 km away, and hence people managed to obtain what they wanted, albeit at higher prices. The government also imposed deterrent fines on bullock carts and vehicles leaving the area with coconuts, betel leaves and cashew nuts bound for market. The area has also been deprived of any help from developmental, anti-poverty or twenty-point programs for over three years on the pretext that personnel are not allowed in the area. In a threatening posture, personnel of the Orissa State Armed Police have been deployed in the area, which follows the helicopter air-dropping of notices by the State onto the villages around *Amchua Hat* (market) on December 1, 1986. Warning the people against resisting the Range, the notice stated "Halt these activities at once. If the (resisters) continue such illegal activities, then the Government will be forced to take punitive measures against them," and informed the vil-



Bhograi and to comply (without restrictions) with the obligations following from its accession on July 10, 1979 to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

His Excellency Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi  
Race Course Road  
New Delhi 11001  
India

His Excellency K.C. Pant  
Minister of Defense  
Ministry of Defense  
New Delhi, India

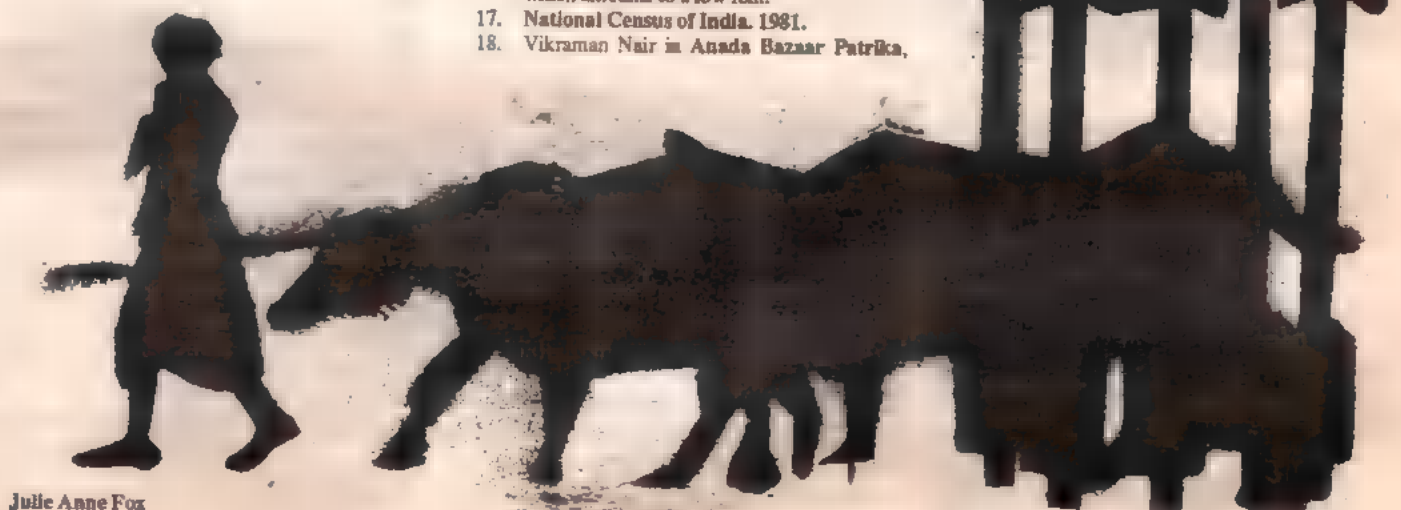
#### Footnotes

1. "Assessment of Losses": From a memorandum sent to Rajiv Gandhi, Prime Minister of India, by the Resistance movement Against the National Testing Range, March 20, 1986.
2. "The Battle for Baliapal," *The Other Side*, Number 41, August 1986.
3. *National Census of India*, 1981, Orissa State, Baleswar District.
4. *People vs. Baliapal Missile Base*. Report by All-India Federation of Organizations for Democratic Rights (AIFODR).
5. *National Testing Range — Baliapal*. Central Government Report, 1986.
6. Quoted in AIFODR Report (Op. Cit.).
7. Ibid.
8. Quoted in a letter to Biju Patnaik, leader of the opposition, Orissa Legislative Assembly, July 31, 1986.
9. AIFODR Report.
10. Vikramah Nair, 1987. "Resistance unto Death Against the Establishment of Baliapal Missile Test Range," *Ananda Bazaar Patrika*, May 9, 1987.
11. Ibid.
12. Mohan Ram, 1986. Article in *Far Eastern Economic Review*, September 11, 1986.
13. During the 1970's the USSR supplied 80% of India's total imported arms (SIPRI Brochure, 1980) and between 1980-83, four trade agreements on various types of missiles were reached between India and the USSR (as well as four with France and one each with the United Kingdom and the USA (AIFODR Report)).
14. *The Statesman*, January 22, 1988.
15. Central Government Report (Op. Cit.).
16. It is a common phenomenon for farmers to cultivate unused government lands, especially in this type of coastal area where land is created by sedimentation. The Collector's Office generally institutes proceedings against such encroachers and collects a regular fine which amounts to a low rent.
17. *National Census of India*, 1981.
18. Vikraman Nair in *Ananda Bazaar Patrika*,

19. See for example, Roulledge, Paul, "Modernity as a Vision of Conquest — Development and Culture in India," *Cultural Survival Quarterly*, Vol 11, Number 3, pp. 63-66.
20. *Ananda Bazaar Patrika*, (Op. Cit.).
21. *The Other Side*, (Op. Cit.).
22. Quoted in *The Statesman*, January 22, 1988.
23. Then I.C. Das, the District Collector, and other officials attempted to visit Baliapal in March 1986 to explain the eviction, the were *gheraoed* (surrounded) by over 1,000 people for more than 10 hours and were forced to leave the area on foot.
24. *The Statesman*, January 21, 1988.
25. *Ananda Bazaar Patrika*.
26. *The Telegraph*, February 4, 1988.
27. Quoted in *Ananda Bazaar Patrika* (Op. Cit.).

Julie Anne Fox

Readers are urged to write letters to the Prime Minister and the Defense Minister of India urging them to stop the National Test Range in Baliapal and



Julie Anne Fox



by Lynna Landstreet

(Author's note: This is a severely edited version of my original article. Anyone desiring a copy of the original can get one from me at P.O. Box 1031 Adelaide St. Stn, Toronto, M5C 2K4, as well as "Green Herrings", an article on the Deep Ecology/Social Ecology cat-fight. Donations for postage/photocopying would be appreciated if possible.)

First of all, let's get our terms straight. What's meant here by spirituality is Neo-Pagan spirituality, as distinct from other types such as Christianity, Buddhism, etc. And that, for anyone who's not familiar with the term, is a diverse spectrum of groups and individuals involved in creating new forms of spirituality that draw to varying extents on pre-Christian Pagan traditions. The most prevalent forms are Witchcraft or Wicca (about which there have been various articles in KIO from time to time), and feminist spirituality, which is fairly closely linked to Wicca but not identical with it (some spiritual feminists identify themselves as Witches, some don't). There are a large (and increasing) number of politically active Pagans, some of them activists who have found Paganism to be a spiritual path which supports and embraces their politics, but many -- like myself -- Pagans who found anti-authoritarian/feminist/ecological politics to be a logical outgrowth of their spirituality. The main point of mentioning this is to make clear that Neo-Paganism -- and the image of the Goddess that is an integral part of virtually all Pagan traditions -- is not just a recent invention of political activists, but a tradition which has been around for quite some time, independently of political movements and ideologies. Wicca, in particular, has existed in its modern incarnation for about 50 to 100 years -- considerably longer if you count the religious and magical traditions that it developed from.<sup>1</sup>

Now, Biehl casually lumps us all in together as "Goddess worshippers", thus ignoring the very real differences among Pagans, as well as the fact that the gender of the deity is not all there is to Paganism by any means (for one thing, most Wiccan traditions and an increasing number of feminists as well, recognize a God as well as the Goddess). A substantial number of her criticisms, particularly as regard "religious determinism" and sloppy scholarship (speculation/opinion passed off as fact, unwarranted generalizations, etc.) in fact apply only to certain sectors of the Pagan community (in particular, a number of feminist writers), and a lot of other Pagans would heartily agree with her on these points, if only she would refrain from attempting to tar all of us with the same brush. In addition, Biehl herself is as guilty of some of these offences as the people she criticizes, as I'll explain later.

I think that thing that angered me most in her article was the total contempt and lack of respect she shows to anyone suspected of being spiritual. We are variously made out to be everything from self-deluded and unable to distinguish reality from "illusion" to sinister agents of evil bent on seducing and corrupting innocent political activists with our "pernicious" and "dangerous" views. In the *Toronto Sun*, I might find that amusing, but to see it in KIO hurts.

She begins the article with a thin veneer of tolerance and pluralism, describing how some people found it to be "a personal support for their political work" (italics added), and assuring us that it didn't become a "problem" until they started viewing it politically. However, the veneer starts to fade pretty quickly.

She draws as clear a distinction between political activists and spiritual people as she does between the personal and the political, the implication being that we are somehow not real activists, but one-dimensional creatures defined solely by our spirituality. She also subtly alters Charlene Spretnak's statement that spirituality is "a key to a better life", to "the key", thus again reducing a complex idea to a single dimension and reading into it the religious determinism that she goes on to criticize.

Her constant reiteration of the theme that the Goddess is an "illusion" or "supernatural fiction", that spirituality "confuses reality and fantasy", etc., ... *nauseam*, aside from being merely an opinion presented as fact, is essentially an attempt to invalidate the experience of anyone who disagrees with her. I also don't know who she thinks she's trying to convince with that sort of argument: those of us who are spiritual obviously don't believe that our reality and experience are illusions, while those who do aren't spiritual and thus don't need any convincing. The core of her argument amounts to "spirituality is bad because spirituality is bad" -- circular logic of a pretty self-defeating kind.

But behind this sort of preaching-to-the-converted lies a narrow-minded refusal to recognize any forms of reality other than *consensus* reality, the reality that is experienced in the same way by everyone. In fact, however, internal, subjective realities are very real to the people perceiving them. An example: let's assume that it is raining outside, and inside, I am in the midst of a suicidal depression. The rain is part of consensus reality -- anyone who looks outside can see it. My depression, on the other hand, is a part of my *subjective* reality -- it is excruciatingly real to me, but it is not necessarily going to be perceived by anyone else. In addition, different people can experience the same situation in different ways. I may be feeling that the world is horrible and that it is raining just to depress me further. Someone else, outside, may feel that the world is wonderful, and that it is raining to wash away the pollution and nourish the plants. The objective reality, the rain and the world, is the same, it is our experience of it that is different. Both of our subjective realities are valid -- neither one of us is "right" or "wrong".

Similarly, if you see the Earth as inert, lifeless matter and I see it as the body of the Great Mother, neither one of us is right or wrong. The objective, consensus reality is that the Earth is there, that we walk on it, that plants grow out of it, etc. It is our personal subjective realities that differ. This is not to say that consensus reality and subjective reality are the *same*. Obviously, being depressed is different from, say, being hit on the head by a falling brick (although it may not seem like it at the

time). However, they are both real in their own way.

Biehl's contempt for anyone with spiritual inclinations is also made clear in the way that she strips anyone who disagrees with her of all authority and credibility while exalting writers who are on her side. Thus, Sarah Pomeroy is an "eminent feminist classical scholar",

# The Politics

A response to Janet Biehl's

while Merlin Stone is merely a "goddess promoter" who "trumpets" her views in her "goddess book", *When God Was A Woman*.<sup>2</sup> One would never guess that Stone and Pomeroy are both university professors, or that ten years of research went into Stone's book.

This contempt for spiritual people and her refusal to recognize our experience as valid may also be at the root of another of the major problems with the article: Her total (and perhaps deliberate) lack of understanding of immanence theology.<sup>3</sup>

It has often been remarked that modern atheism is in fact very little different from traditional patriarchal religion -- it maintains the same basic mindset, but amputates the God. This is one of the reasons I feel that spirituality is an important consideration for political movements: to merely get rid of the God into which all of the value and content of nature has been placed leaves the world empty and barren. This is what I think may be at the root of the negation of nature expressed in Biehl's critique of Deep Ecology in Issue 21. It also underlies her inability (or refusal?) to conceive of -- or realize that anyone else conceives of -- any aspect of religion in other than traditional Judeo-Christian terms. Thus: The Goddess is "supernatural", ancient peoples could not have held nature as sacred because they did not separate it from the rest of life, priest(ess)hood is "hierarchical", etc. The idea of a deity *immanent* in nature rather than apart from it, a concept of sacredness based on *connectedness* rather than on separation, or a priestess as someone who has chosen to work on developing certain skills and areas of knowledge in order to share them with others and act as a resource person for her community, rather than a wielder of hierarchal power, seems to be inconceivable to her.

When we try to explain the principles of immanence, that "the Goddess does not rule the world, She *is* the world,"<sup>4</sup> that nature is not separate from humankind, that our view of spirituality does not include an abstract and alienated "supernature", but is based on an intense respect and reverence for nature itself, we are accused of "confusing" or "blurring the distinction between nature and supernature". The idea that we might actually disagree with the ideology that draws that distinction is, again, inconceivable to her. Again, this reveals her basic contempt for anyone who disagrees with her -- they can't possibly really disagree, they must just be "confused", i.e. we are not even given credit for being able to form an opinion.

Now, as I mentioned, many Pagans, myself included, agree with Biehl's criticism of the generalizations, sloppy scholarship, and theory-passed-off-as-fact that characterises much feminist writing on spirituality. However, Biehl herself commits many of the same offences, by relying on a lot of opinion

presented as fact, sweeping generalizations, plus at least one case of outright misrepresentation of a writer's point of view. Biehl's incessant emphasis on "the facts" and "the anthropological record" neatly avoids the reality that "the facts" point in a whole lot of different directions, and that you can cite anthropological data to prove just about

using more complex criteria for evaluating mythic systems, there was a strong correlation between female-centered creation myths, high status for women, and various other social factors such as fewer sexually segregated activities, fewer sexual-pollution taboos, and plant-rather than animal-based economies? Not only that, but, while Sanday's initial thesis was that mythic sys-

unified movement that either deals with spirituality or doesn't leaves no room for individual choice. She starts out by criticizing the idea of a potential spiritual "party line", but has no qualms about creating an anti-spiritual one. She criticizes Spretnak for saying that non-spiritual people should be "allowed plenty of space", asking who is "doing

the allowing", but is quite ready to disallow spiritual people any space whatsoever. This is something I've often noticed, that spiritual people seem more willing to allow non-spiritual people the

right to their own beliefs than vice-versa. This may be due to the fact that most spiritual people recognize the existence of subjective reality, whereas most non-spiritual people define anything other than consensus reality as being illusion. Thus, while there is space for Biehl in my worldview as a person who experiences reality differently than I do, the only space for me in hers is as either an evil goddess-promoting corruptor of innocent political activists or, at best, as a confused, deluded, pathetic creature, devoid of human intelligence and incapable of distinguishing between reality and fantasy.

But a more important question, perhaps, is whether there is a need for a homogeneous, unified movement at all, or whether a more decentralist approach might be healthier, that is, a network or web of autonomous groups, each formed of people who share a common worldview and approach, working with other groups from time to time on the things that we hold in common, but not feeling the need to agree with others on everything or to force others to agree with us.

Any brand of determinism, religious, economic, ecological, or sexual, is oppressive insofar as it invalidates the reality of anyone who sees another issue as more pressing. We need to recognize the interconnectedness and interaction of all forms of oppression, and that to work on any part of it is to help undermine the whole structure. There's a saying that a thousand mice can do more damage than one lion; let's let each mouse do its damage where it feels it's needed most. If we can all feel secure enough in our own world views and priorities to allow others to have their own, we'll probably get a lot more accomplished and cause each other less pain on the way. □

#### Notes:

1. For general background information on Neopaganism and Wicca, Margot Adler's *Drawing Down the Moon: Witches, Druids, Goddess Worshipers, and Other Pagans in America Today* (Beacon Press, 1979, 1986) is the best source. For more in-depth philosophical/theological/political analysis, see any of Starhawk's books: *The Spiral Dance* (Harper Row, 1979), *Dreaming the Dark* (Beacon Press, 1982), and *Truth or Dare*.
2. Merlin Stone, *When God Was A Woman* (Harvest/HBJ, 1976).
3. "Thealogy" isn't a typo, it's a spelling used by many Pagans in place of the traditional "theology", because it is based on "thea", Goddess, rather than "theos", God. For more information on immanence theology, see Starhawk's books.
4. Starhawk, *The Spiral Dance*, p. 9.
5. Peggy Reeves Sanday, "Female Status in the Public Domain", in Rosaldo & Lamphere (eds), *Woman, Culture, & Society* (Stanford University Press, 1974).
6. Peggy Reeves Sanday, *Female Power and Male Dominance* (Cambridge University Press, 1981).
7. *Ibid.*, p. xv.

# of Atheism

## The Politics of Myth

any damn thing you can think of. One of the first things I learned when I was an anthro major is that *nothing* is universal. One cannot draw conclusions such as x always leads to y, or z is true of all early cultures; one can only assess general trends. Anthropological data (or any other kind for that matter) is not handed down from on high as cast-iron fact, but is filtered through the opinions and prejudices of many people, from the researchers who did the original fieldwork, to the writers who cite certain selected pieces of that data in books, to the people who cite certain pieces of those books, etc. Biehl's own example of Arthur Evans' work on Crete out to make this abundantly clear.

But aside from the difficulty of finding and presenting accurate information on past cultures, there is the more important point that we are not trying to recreate past cultures anyway. Neopaganism is about creating religion for the present and future. I may draw on the past for inspiration and ideas, but we are not dependent upon it to validate our beliefs. The only real test of the validity of our spirituality is whether it works for us right now. Thus, whether the Cretan Snake Goddess statue is an accurate image of the Goddess as She was envisioned in Crete, or was constructed out of bits and pieces by Arthur Evans, or sculpted by me last week out of playdough, does not matter. What matters is the feelings, visions, and insights evoked by that image in us, here and now. A particular image or symbol may work for some people and not for others. And that's just fine.

However, despite all that, I can't resist pointing out some of the most glaring inaccuracies in Biehl's anthropological diatribe. First of all, she states that "the alleged goddess (was not) an earth goddess... she was rather a sky or sun goddess". Now aside from the ridiculously simplistic implication that there was a single Goddess with a single set of attributes in all cultures, Sky and Sun Goddesses are relatively rare compared to the more common Earth, Moon and Sea Goddesses.

And yes, both the Egyptians and the Sumerians worshipped Sky and Sun deities, among many others, at certain points in their histories. What deities were given prevalence change over time as did many other aspects of each society, and to represent them as static and unchanging is inaccurate and ahistorical.

The thing that disturbs me most in this section, however, was her citing of an early article by anthropologist Peggy Sanday based on a study of twelve societies which concluded that "there is no correlation between percentage of female deities and female status."<sup>5</sup> Has Biehl never heard of Sanday's later book *Female Power and Male Dominance*<sup>6</sup>, in which, based on a study of over 150 societies, she found that,

terms would be developed over time ■ legitimize the existing sexual power structures, she writes that:

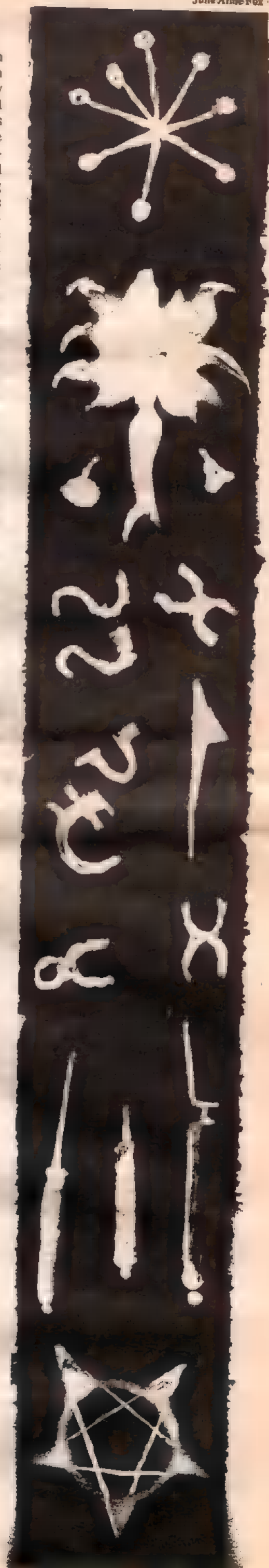
*Preliminary analysis of the data indicated that sacred symbols are not, as I had originally supposed, an epiphenomena of secular power roles. In fact it became clear that the reverse was more likely: Secular power roles are derived from ancient concepts of sacred power.<sup>7</sup>*

I also have some very deep disagreements with many aspects of Biehl's politics and philosophy as they appear in this article. Firstly, there is the hard-and-fast split between personal and political that seems contrary to one of the basic principles of both feminist and anarchist politics. She likens spirituality to sex or therapy as an exclusively "personal" concern that political movements must not involve themselves with lest they cease to be political movements and become dating or counselling services! This analogy falls flat when one considers that sexual politics and, to a lesser extent, the politics of therapy (institutional psychiatry in particular) are dealt with pretty extensively by political movements, and no one seems to have become too corrupted by it yet. It's just another example of the reduction of anything having to do with spirituality to a single dimension -- just as political activists who involve themselves with spirituality are no longer considered political activists, so is a movement which attempts to deal with it apparently no longer a political movement.

Another, and perhaps nastier, trait can be seen in her claim that "most Goddess books are written at a grade 6 level" and her lengthy diatribe about how the "goddess-promoters" are "commodifying" spirituality and ecological politics for "mass consumption", which means, essentially, that they're attempting to make these ideas accessible to people other than white middle-class academics. It disturbs me that some people still seem to see the revolution will be brought about solely by white middle-class PhD's and that the "masses" had best be kept in blissful ignorance of their own good (who knows what would happen if ordinary people got hold of such a dangerous concept as *ecological politics*!!!) Simply put, this is nothing but elitist, classist garbage.

Then there's her paranoid individualism, almost reminiscent of right-wing ideologue Ayn Rand as she defies reason and logic to the point where it begins to sound like she has a pathological fear of emotion, intuition, imagination, and other "dangerous" human qualities. She is horrified by the thought of someone imagining that they are a tree as a means of grounding energy in ritual -- apparently that means being "divested of one's rationality"!

In addition, her insistence upon a



## In brief

by Don Alexander

*Movement for a New Society* has announced that it has ended its existence as an organization. The group of 135 radical activists from throughout North America was dedicated to revolutionary non-violence, feminism, ecological sustainability, and social justice. MNS decided to disband to free members to experiment with more effective structures for meeting the political challenges of the 1990's.

Mitchel Cohen, the author of "Tale of the Quayle" in the last KIO, wrote a very evocative memoir about his (ongoing) experiences as a 60's radical, entitled "I Was A Teenage Communist." It appeared in the Spring 1988 issue of *Red Balloon*. A copy can be had by sending \$2.00 to: RB, c/o Mitchel Cohen, 2652 Cropsey Avenue (#7H), Brooklyn, New York, U.S.A., 11214.

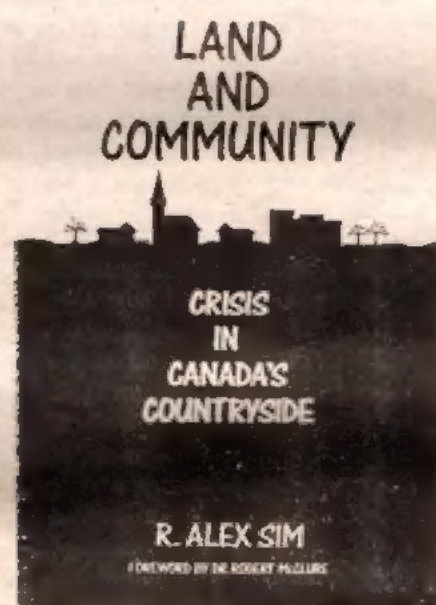
Reality Now has unearthed evidence that "Chief Seattle's Message" is a fake. According to a Swedish journalist, the text was originally written as part of a film script for a Southern Baptist organization in 1970. Copies of the "expose" can be had for \$1.00 from: RN, P.O. Box 6326, Station A, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5W 1P2.

*Possessed*, a relatively new zine from Seattle, has published three issues to date. In the latest, editor Xerox Vermont takes us on a tour of the latest Leninist vs. skinhead confrontation, and comes to the conclusion that you need a scorecard to tell them apart. *Possessed* is free to prisoners, and \$1.00 a copy for everyone else (U.S. currency preferred, but not essential). Write to: *Possessed*, P.O. Box 20545, Seattle, Washington, USA 98102.

The *Syndicat des Eleves* has completed an info package on Nazi skinheads that it is distributing for \$2.50 a copy. The Syndicat is also willing to find out legal stuff, provide moral support and publicize injustices for youth/children imprisoned in reform schools, centres d'accueil, youth prisons, etc. The Syndicat can be reached at: 2035 Boul. St-Laurent, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H2X 2T3.

The *Canadian Alliance in Solidarity with Native People* (CASNP) needs cash to keep going. To support its valuable work, send cheques or money orders (made out to the full name) to: CASNP, P.O. Box 574, Station P, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5T 2T1.

The Havasupai Indians (see "Reggae on the Reservation" in KIO #19) are



fighting uranium drilling in their ancestral home, the Grand Canyon: "We, the Havasupai people, have lived within the Grand Canyon and upon the plateau as keepers and caretakers of this great Grandmother Canyon. From where we stand we will still protect the Grand Canyon and its surrounding life. We will still fight to see that our great Grandmother Canyon will be left alone as it has been in the past, present and hopefully on into the future for our younger generations to see." For more information, contact the *International Indian Treaty Council*, 1259 Folsom St., San Francisco, California, USA 94103.

The *Asia-Pacific People's Environment Network* is coordinating a campaign against the export by Canada of a food irradiation plant to Thailand. The plant, produced by Atomic Energy of Canada Limited (AECL) and funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), is being smuggled into Thailand without any public discussion or debate. Letters demanding the cancellation of the project are being sent to: Rt. Hon. Brian Mulroney, Prime Minister of Canada, Office of the Prime Minister, Ottawa, Canada K1A 0A2, with copies being sent to *Probe International*, 100 College St. (6th floor), Toronto, Ontario M5G 1L5.

On January 10, 1989, the Prime Minister of Thailand announced that his government was declaring a total ban on the logging of that country's tropical forests, after logging was implicated in disastrous floods in the south of the country. It is estimated that, due to rapacious logging practices, Thai forest cover has declined from 66% of the country to 19% since 1950. Information provided by

the *Asia-Pacific People's Environment Network*, c/o Sahabat Alam Malaysia, 43 Salween Road, 10050 Penang, Malaysia.

In past columns, we have discussed the destruction of the tropical forests in Sarawak, Malaysia belonging to the tribal Penan people. *Survival International* is urging that letters be sent to: YAB Dato' Seri Dr. Mahathir Din Mohammed, Prime Minister of Malaysia, Prime Minister's Department, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia Jalan Dato' Onn, 50480, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The letters should call for dropping all charges against natives defending their forests, an end to arrests of natives, that the Forest Ordinance of November 1987 (which makes interference with logging activities a criminal offense) be repealed, that logging concessions on native land claim areas be revoked, and that native peoples' rights to their land be respected by law. Letters should be courteous and should begin with "Your Excellency".

One aspect of the conflict in the Middle East which is often overlooked is the ecological consequences of Israeli expansionism. According to Paul Hubers, the average Palestinian farmer relying on hand-intensive cultivation produces almost double the value of agricultural output per unit of water than the average Israeli farmer, without using chemicals or tools that may ruin the region's shallow, arid top-soil. Apparently the Sea of Galilee is no longer drinkable without special treatment, due to Israeli settler sewage overflow. In addition, the Kishan River has been carrying raw industrial waste into the eastern Mediterranean, while the beaches around Haifa, one of Israel's most highly industrialized cities, are encrusted with tar. Concerns have also been expressed about the potential for radioactive and thermal pollution from new nuclear power plants at Shifra, in the Negev. In short, far from making the desert bloom, Western-style Israeli "civilization" may be supplementing colonialism against the Palestinians with colonialism against nature.

Contaminated water is said to be the cause of 50% of all infant deaths in Nicaragua (and many other Third World countries). The London-based *Nicaraguan Health Fund* is setting up wells and teaching villagers how to maintain them. For more information, write to: *Nicaraguan Health Fund*, 83 Margaret St., London, U.K. W1N 7HB.

An invaluable source of information on developments in Eastern Europe is the *Bulletin of the European Network of East-West Dialogue*. Copies are available from Bruce Allen at: *Neither East nor West*, P.O. Box 284, Main Station, St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada L2R 6T7. Bruce's new book, *Germany East: Dissent and Opposition*, is now available from Black Rose Books for \$14.95 paperback. For more info and a Black Rose catalogue, write to: BRB, 3981 boulevard St-Laurent (4th floor), Montreal, Quebec, Canada H2W 1Y5.

Sergei Troyanskii, a Russian anarchist long active in the Moscow counter-culture is in prison, possibly (it's not clear from the information I received) for possession of drugs. I'm not sure whether Sergei is allowed correspondence, but his prison address is: SPB II Otdelenye, (Uchr.) Ya.0-100/7, Sychovka,

Smolenskaya Oblast, USSR. Letters demanding that Sergei be released may be sent to: Mikhail Gorbachev, Moscow, Kremlin, USSR.

Nikki Craft (see KIO #19) and five other plaintiffs in a class action civil suit against Cape Cod National Seashore are withdrawing from the case. Craft and ten others had been arrested for a "shirt-free action" to protest double standard nudity laws. The suit's sponsor, the Nativist Society, has focussed publicity and legal strategy on "free speech", ignoring the issue of women's oppression. For this reason, Craft and the others are withdrawing their support. For more information, write to: Craft c/o *The Iconoclast*, P.O. Box 4636, East Lansing, Michigan, USA 48826.

The *Ryerson Women's Centre* is being evicted from their office. They are requesting that letters of protest be sent to the *Ryerson Polytechnical Institute* (RPI) administration and to the student union (SURPI). To contact them and the Women's Centre staff, send correspondence to: RPI, 350 Victoria Street, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5B 1W7. Address your letters to: SURPI, Ryerson's president, or to the Women's Centre (Room A75, Student Union).



"The historic role of government is order."  
—Alexander Berkman  
"Power operates only destructively, bent always on forcing every manifestation of life into the straitjacket of its laws. Its intellectual form of expression is dead dogma, its physical form brute force."  
—Rudolf Rocker

Dandelion Community Co-op, an intentional community, is sponsoring a conference on communal living in September. For more information, write to: Dandelion Community Co-op, R.R. #1, Enterprise, Ontario, Canada K0K 1Z0.

A new book on the problem of revitalizing community life in rural Canada has been published by the University of Guelph. The book, *Land and Community: Crisis in Canada's Countryside* by Alex R. Sim, is available for \$15.00 + \$2.00 shipping from: Rural Books, Box 1588, Guelph, Ontario, Canada N1H 6R7.

The ever-prolific George Bradford has written a new issue-length essay, entitled "Return of the Son of Deep Ecology: The Ethics of Permanent Crisis and the Permanent Crisis in Ethics," in the Spring 1989 issue of the *Fifth Estate*. His previous "How Deep is Deep Ecology?" is being published by Times Change Press as a perfect-bound book. Copies of the latest FE are available for \$2.00 (U.S.); subscriptions are \$5.00 in the U.S. (\$7.00 Canada and overseas). Send money to: FE, Box 02548, Detroit, Michigan, USA 48202.

**Kick It Over** recently received a letter from *Alternativa Verda*, a bioregional political organization in Catalonia, which is challenging the decision by the European Greens not to admit AV, because it is not a nation-state based organization. For more information, write to: AV, C. la Lluna, 24, pral. 2a., 08001, Barcelona, Catalonia (Spain).

## The South Sound Alliance



The South Sound Alliance, produced in Olympia, Washington, features material of interest both regionally and continentally. Their December 1988 issue carried an interview with Yanique Joseph and Jeffrey Lewis, two urban Black activists who participated in the third North American Bioregional Congress (see KIO #22). The interview discusses obstacles to the full participation of people of colour in the bioregional movement. The issue also reprinted an excellent article from *Processed World* called "Auto-destruction: Car Culture and Its Discontents." Subscriptions are \$15.00 U.S. For a sample, send \$2.00 to: S.S. Alliance, P.O. Box 921, Olympia, Washington, USA 98507.

The New Internationalist recently produced an excellent theme issue entitled "Car Chaos" (May 1989). Copies can be had for \$3.00 + postage by writing to: NI, 175 Carlton St., Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5A 2K3.

A recent issue of the *Nuclear Resister* featured an article entitled "The Inside Line" by Willa Elam, a 45 year-old Black activist who chucked an executive position with Standard Oil to become a full-time peace activist. She is currently serving a year sentence for trespassing on Mother's Day at the Kennedy Space Centre in Florida. The issue (November 4, 1988) can be obtained for \$1.00 from: NR, P.O. Box 43383, Tucson, Arizona, USA 85733.

Mumia Abu-Jamal, a Black journalist, was arrested in 1981 for the supposed murder of a Philadelphia policeman. Jamal was, at the time of his arrest, President of the Association of Black Journalists in Philadelphia. Jamal had conducted interviews with imprisoned MOVE members after the 1978 siege and mass murder at their headquarters, and had once been a member of the Black Panther Party. His trial (by 11 white jurors) was highly dubious and resulted in his conviction and a sentence of death. Letters demanding that the death sentence be commuted are being sent to: Governor Casey, Main Capitol Building, Room 225, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, USA 17120.

The following prisoners are looking for pen pals: David Ray Martin #154135, 1012 W. Columbia, Farmington, Missouri, USA 63640, Manuel Perez, 071104 I-2-N-4, Florida State Prison, Box 747, Starke, Florida, USA 32091, and Steven D. Ritchie #093378-70-108, Union Correctional Institution, Box 221, Raiforce, Florida, USA 32083.

Dutch peace activists have been facing arrest and prison terms for their efforts to beat military planes into ploughshares, particularly planes destined for the near-fascist regime of Turkey (a junior NATO member). For more information, contact the Dutch Ploughshare Support Group, c/o A. Sniederslaan 14, 5615 GE EINDHOVEN, The Netherlands.

A massive three days of protest against Shell's support for the apartheid regime in South Africa was conducted in North Amsterdam on April 19, 20, and 21. This climaxed a long campaign of public agitation and direct action (including sabotage) which has left Shell quite isolated in the Netherlands. We are anxious to hear how it turned out. For more information, write to: "Shell uit Zuid-Africa," Postbus 6452, 1005 EL Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

A new paperback edition of *Defending Civil Resistance Under International Law* by Francis Boyle is now available. It covers theory, practice and sample trial materials relating to South Africa, Central America, and nuclear protests. \$8.00 (U.S.) from the Nuclear Resister, P.O. Box 43383, Tucson, Arizona, USA 85733.

The government of Botswana wants to expel the *Basarwa* people ("Bushmen") from the Central Kalahari Game Reserve. To find out more, write to: *Survival International*, 310 Edgware Road, London, U.K. W2 1DY.

Peace News is a long-running, non-dogmatic pacifist publication in the U.K. Their December 9, 1988 issue featured a remarkable article on "Eritrea - The Underground Revolution." People have long commented that the Eritrean revolution seems less authoritarian than most. Authors Debbie Ellen and Pete Abel found an extraordinarily well-provisioned "underground society" where sophisticated surgery is performed in below-ground caverns, along with pharmaceutical factories, printing presses, blacksmiths, and machine shops. The Ethiopian military *Dergue*, traditionally backed by their Soviet allies, have been trying to hang on to Eritrea, first annexed by Ethiopian ruler Haile Selassie in 1962. More information on the Eritrean cause can be obtained from: The *Eritrean Information Office*, 140 Battersea Park Road, London SW11, U.K. Humanitarian donations are being accepted by: *Eritrean Relief Association*, BCM Box 865, London WCI, U.K. Send lots of cash for a sample copy of Peace News (overseas postage is expensive), and ask them for their overseas subscription rate. Write to: PN, 8 Elm Avenue, Nottingham 3, U.K.

A journal based in India, *Philosophy and Social Action*, is seeking papers on the following themes for special issues: corruption and social action, theory and social action, resisting state violence, and forming agendas for social movements.

The deadlines are December 31 for the first topic, and at three-month intervals for subsequent issues. For more information, write to: Brian Martin, Department of Science and Technology Studies, University of Wollongong, P.O. Box 1144, Wollongong NSW 2500, Australia or phone (042)287-860 (check with the overseas operator first).

**Kick It Over** recently received an anarchist publication from Turkey. Use discretion in writing to them as Turkey is a very repressive country. Also I'm not sure if they read English. Write to: Ufuk Ozcan, Pk. 953 34437, Sirkeci, Istanbul, Turkey.

Black Swan has just published an interesting new anthology entitled, *Arsenal: Surrealist Subversion*, on the interface between art and politics. The book, which is 224 pages long, is available in paperback for \$12.00 (U.S.) plus postage from: Black Swan Press, 1726 West Jarvis Ave., Chicago, Illinois, USA 60626.



The State University of New York at Buffalo offers some innovative graduate programmes in popular musicology, Native studies, women's studies, Puerto Rican studies, and Afro-American studies. Some of their members are also involved in producing a radio show ("Beautiful River") on WBFO (88.7 FM) on Saturday nights (12 to 1 a.m.), and are interested in Green, bioregional, and Native tidbits from Ontario. For more information, contact: Charlie Keil, Department of American Studies, Faculty of Arts and Letters, 1010 Clemens Hall, Buffalo, New York, USA 14260.

The Radical Teacher is looking for articles (2500 to 4000 words jargon-free) on various aspects of ecological education. The material (deadline: January 1990) is for a special issue. One-page proposals should be sent to: Jack Weston, Box 1160, Pauma Valley, California, USA 92061.

The Minnesota Library Association publishes a newsletter which summarizes material available on social change themes. For a sample copy, send money for printing and postage to: MSSRRT, The Minnesota Library Association c/o North Regional Library, 1315 Lowry Avenue North, Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA 55411. □

## Korean Workers' Movement

*Asia Labour Monitor*  
Min-Ju No-Jo: South Korea's New Trade Unions  
Kowloon, Hong Kong: Asia Monitor Resource Centre, 1988, \$5.00 (U.S.) plus postage and handling

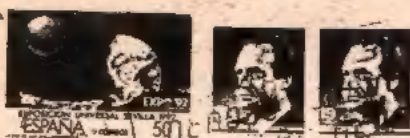
reviewed by Bruce Allen

The phenomenal growth of workers' struggles in South Korea during the past two years and the resulting birth of a new, truly democratic Korean trade union movement stands as one of the most positive developments in the contemporary international labour scene. Now, thanks to the efforts of the Hong Kong-based *Asia Labour Monitor*, workers in English-speaking countries have access to a resource which enables us to see beyond the mass media's shallow coverage of this subject and gain a deeper appreciation of its significance.

The book, *Min-Ju No-Jo: South Korea's New Trade Unions*, makes this possible by offering an excellent, well-researched analysis of the struggles of South Korean labour, especially during the 1987 summer strike wave. Its analysis details the severe exploitation of a work force which has been at the mercy of a brutal, military-dominated government and transnational corporations that have reaped nearly all the benefits of South Korea's 'economic miracle'. The book similarly exposes the servile nature of the government-manipulated trade unions. These were first established at the initiative of the United States in the immediate post-war era and their credibility as labour organizations has been shattered by the rise of the new worker-organized unions.

First-hand accounts of struggles by shipyard and auto workers against conglomerates like Hyundai and Daewoo (Daewoo Motor Corporation is 50% GM-owned) offer the most inspiring sections of the book. These accounts instill a firm conviction in the reader that the workers who waged these struggles need and deserve the whole-hearted support of their counterparts across the globe. Indeed, they and their new unions deserve the same kind of decisive international support that Poland's workers have received since 1980.

Yet, it is clear, from this book's closing chapter on the potential for international trade union support, that such ongoing solidarity is being blocked. The authors correctly cite the *International Confederation of Free Trade Unions'* formal links to the totally discredited, government-backed unions as the main reason for this. They also leave no doubt that getting around this obstacle is essential for the continued advance of the new South Korean workers' movement. We cannot allow this obstruction to get in the way of lending assistance; it is in our interest to support the efforts of Korean workers in their struggle against global capitalism. □



KICK IT OVER  
POB 5811 St. A  
TORONTO  
MSW 1P2  
CANADA

VIA AEREA  
PAR AVION

## No Pomp and Circumstance

Dear KIO,

This (letter) is in response to the two pieces in your fall issue (KIO #22, Fall, 1988) related to the third North American Bioregional Congress (NABC III). Don Alexander's analytic description of bioregionalism was generally excellent, perceptive, sensitive and well researched. David Haenke's contribution, a warning on the use and abuse of spirituality contained many useful points for all to keep in mind.

For example, I really agree with Haenke on being careful of guru types. As he says, "True spiritual leaders make few or no claims, advertise little, if at all, and take little or nothing for what they give out." I myself do not "follow" Gurus or any kind of "spiritual middlemen: or "spirit brokers". And, as some say, "guru" means "teacher"; however, to some extent I think we are always teaching and learning.

There was a very strong positive convergence at NABC III. Many people from a wide variety of perspectives came together and "congressed," and as Don said participated with their "whole being." This was a crucial positive aspect of NABC III. Everyone participated in a wide variety of activities: food preparation, clean-up, childcare, workshops, panels, bonding with others, including other species. Other activities included self-made music, poetry, dramatized bioregional presentations, and swimming.

Variety and diversity are very highly valued by biogeographers and ecologists (including "scientific" ecologists, deep ecologists, social ecologists and political ecologists) both in human and non-human populations, communities, and cultures. (Humans are not the only species to have cultures.)

Of course, since people were, in fact, genuinely participating with their whole beings there were inevitably some disagreements over a whole number of questions. This was a positive aspect of the congressing too. Don quoted Stephanie Mills on the 1986 NABC when she wrote "Bioregionalism should not demand religious expression or participation." This too I most strongly and emphatically support. Neither bioregionalists nor anyone else should "demand" religious expression. However, I do believe bioregionalism should encourage "coming to understand the Earth as a live and sacred being, and of paying symbolic honour to that holy life" as Stephanie Mills (quoted -- approvingly I assume -- by Don) also wrote. I don't believe Don or David Haenke are discouraging spiritual connection to earth. However, I think there are a diversity of ways, a great diversity of ways, to honour our living home -- the earth.

Some of us (about 75 out of 300 people) chose to go to Starhawk's ritual workshop on the afternoon after the first big opening circle that morning. Many

different people gave workshops (Don and I were put together to present in the same workshop for example) and participation was very open to people who wanted to give workshops. This was part of the open kind of "congressing" that occurred at NABC III.

It contained "in embryo the outlines of a possible non-statist society" as Don mentioned in his article.

This congress had a "flavour" of the bio-region in which it was held, the Pacific Northwest, Ish River Bioregion (the Fraser River watershed).

Drumming and dancing are an important part of cultural activities there with many people. But so were they for many others from other bioregions. Some of us drummed and danced every night after other activities were over. Many people there were becoming more connected to their non-human relations. In this spirit an "all-species costume ball" was held the last evening after the closing big circle and dinner. Many dressed up as their favourite or chosen species. There were some very good creative costumes. Some of the people from the local hosts played music and were joined by others as well. That night was a full moon. After the dance about 75 people participated in a full moon ritual, many still in costumes, dancing and chanting a spiral dance for hours to a variety of drums, including African, native North American, and I believe a Celtic drum too. I was one of the dancers. I felt very connected to everyone in the spiral, to myself, to the earth, and to our ancestors, our ancient ancestors. To my knowledge everyone there chose to be there. I too practice silent listening, letting "the Earth do the sacred speaking and singing," as David wrote in his piece. There was plenty of opportunity to do that as well at this congress. It was held in a valley with a cold stream running through it, a valley called "Paradise Valley." I had many quiet moments and hours -- by that mountain stream. However, my whole being was involved in the congressing so I also shared in the ritual. I did not know quite what to expect; I had never really participated in a full moon ritual before. I have read extensively in the fairly short period since last August about ritual. Ritual can be a way of bonding individual and community together in love, a way of celebrating group togetherness and individual diversity simultaneously. It has everything to do with An-archaic society which is how Fredy Perlman has described most of human existence on this earth. It is worth quoting from his "Against History, against Leviathan":

Reduced to blank slates by school, we cannot know what it was to grow up heirs to thousands of generations of vision, insight, experience. We cannot know what it was to learn to hear the plants grow and to feel the growth. -- When the mother shares the experience, she also shares the thousands of generations of vision and insight, the wisdom that helped make her experience so meaningful, so frightfully profound. She doesn't apply chalk to a blackboard. She doesn't write a textbook. She hops. She sings. She begins the "lurid dance", the "orgy" that will one day terrify the Christians. Her cousins and nieces join in the dance. They let go, they abandon themselves to her songs, her motions. They too let themselves be possessed by the spirit of earth. They too experience the greatest joy imaginable.

And then much later on the last page, Perlman concludes:

America is where Anatolia was. It is a place where human beings, just to stay alive, have to jump, to dance, and by dancing revive the rhythms, recover cyclical time. An-archaic and pantheistic dancers no longer sense the artifice and

its linear His-story as All, but as merely one cycle, one long night, a stormy night that left Earth wounded, but a night that ends, as all nights end, when the sun rises.

Don claimed in his article there was "a tendency for some to impose pagan pomp and circumstance on gathering participants as a whole." I do not feel that is a justified claim. As I have said, the Monday afternoon ritual workshop was completely voluntary as were all workshops, of course. The full moon ritual was held in effect after the NABC III was over. It was of course completely voluntary. The phrase "pagan pomp and circumstance" surprised me. I did not feel the "pomp and circumstance." Quite the contrary? I also noted very carefully Starhawk's way of opening the ritual workshop. Her careful explanations connected very understandably to a communal, social, ecological, and political understanding impressed me as being anything but pomp and circumstance. In *In Search of the Primitive, a critique of civilization*, Stanley Diamond clearly contrasts "primitive" ritual with state rituals. The pomp and circumstance of state rituals, the "manufactured or applied myth filtering down from above" are designed to have the effect of consolidating and/or promoting a hierarchical relationship of dependency between state and individual. Pagan rituals are just the opposite of pomp and circumstance, in my experience. For Diamond, ritualized group occasions in civilized society "strive toward repression of ambivalence rather than recognition and cultural use." In a patriotic ceremony in this sense, "all state structures tend toward the totalitarian." You could hardly even imagine a "burlesque of the sacred" taking place in a state ceremony. But, says Diamond, "among primitives, sacred events are frequently and publicly caricatured even as they occur." He then himself quotes Huizinga on ritual and "play".

The concept of play merges quite naturally with that of holiness -- Primitive ritual is thus sacred play, indispensable for the well-being of the community, fecund of cosmic insight and social development.

While there are pagans who take themselves too seriously and consequently lose their flexibility, this is not the case with Starhawk. The sense of play, of letting go of our adult dignity, the willingness to look foolish is for Starhawk the "key to opening the deepest states of consciousness." For me, this "letting go", the opposite of pomp and circumstance, was at the core of the drawing down the moon ritual at NABC III.

Humans are not the only species to practice ritual as Frederick Turner points out in *Beyond Geography/The Western Spirit Against the Wilderness*. "Ritual" behaviour has been observed in species as various as apes (some of whom perform rain dances for example) and fish, and elephants. Turner then comments:

Primitive observations of animal behaviour in particular fostered the conclusion that animals too had their myths and their ritual dances. So myths abound telling us of human visitors to animal kingdoms where they learn the language of a species and its ways, and learn thus to respect that particular form of life. And sometimes these myths tell us that the human visitors learn so well a wilder way that they do not wish to return to the human world but would rather roam forever with the herd or swim with the school. Such narratives express the interconnectedness and interdependence of all life. They tell us it is an illusion to see true separation between the forms of being. Cumulatively, they have the effect of sanctifying that life they describe.

Though our ancient ancestors didn't have the word "ecology" they knew, as some of us know today, that ritual is part of a sound ecological way of life as well as part of a sound life in community.

I also agree with Stephanie Mills (in the same quotation by Don) that "the borrowed and synthetic vestments we're wearing look awkward as yet, and likely will for the next few hundred years." This metaphorical analogy is telling, especially for peoples of European origin who have been cut off from our tribal roots perhaps more than any other group and for longer than any others. But we all do have those roots from the depths of our co-evolutionary past, rooted in the animal world and lived fully by ancient band societies everywhere, the wisdom of thousands of generations. Of course, we the children of civilization, the children of Leviathan "look awkward as yet, and likely will for the next few hundred years." But, we have begun to reclaim our heritage, to reconnect with our ancestors' earth wisdom. From this wisdom we will learn modesty and lack of pretentiousness, a sense of limits so contrary to the myths of the power complex, but so crucial to primordial society. Yes this is truly a radical ecology, one going to the roots, our roots, earth roots.

In closing, I would like also to refer briefly to the article "The Politics of Myth" by Janet Biehl in the same issue of KIO. She too makes a number of good points about several earlier civilizations. But primal band society is not civilization. Her comment that "spirituality like love, sex, and psychotherapy, is largely a matter of personal concern" comes from within the mental framework of our current (and hopefully last) Leviathan. It is clear from her article that she fears a way of knowing that goes beyond mere "left brain" linear logic. Her reaction to this is, at least in the last third of her article, one of polemical attack. If one follows her logic the only conclusion to draw is that we all become atheists for anything else is dangerous. She writes that the "goddess promoters" (one of those all inclusive polemical smears) seem to be "devoted to blurring the distinction between nature and supernature."

The whole point of neo-paganism is that spirituality is indeed immanent in nature, including of course human beings. The split between so-called "supernature" and "nature", is a false one. It is a central tenet of Western thought since classical Greek philosophy to split spirit and matter. Supernature implies there is nature and then something above and/or beyond nature. The very concept is symptomatic of western dualistic thinking.

I prefer Murray Bookchin's holistic concept (in *Toward an Ecological Society*) of diversity, a "diversity desirable for its own sake, a value to be cherished as part of a spiritized notion of the living universe."

It is clear to me, as a participant at both NABC and the Anarchist Survival Gathering in Toronto, that paganism, or neo-paganism and pantheism have become part of the movement for social and ecological change. Let's accept it, for there are many very good reasons for it.

Mike Carr  
Toronto, ON

Good books for reading: *Against His-story, Against Leviathan* by Fredy Perlman; *In Search of the Primitive* by Stanley Diamond; *Dreaming the Dark* by Starhawk; and *Beyond Geography* by Frederick Turner. All except *Dreaming the Dark* are available at the Fifth Estate Book Store in Detroit.

Dear KIO Collective,

A bit of news from East Vancouver.... We've started a social ecologist group out here called "Red and Green".... Moreover, there's a major battle shaping up over the building of a mall and sky scraper in Grandview Woodlands (the Kensington of Vancouver). The Grandview Woodlands area council (delegated by neighbourhood assembly) was able to mobilize about 600 people against it. The city council meeting where they passed it went until 3 in the morning because so many people spoke against it. The cops were called in when the anarchists started throwing wads of paper at



George Sanders

right-wing councillors. Now that it's passed there will probably be a shift to direct action to prevent it being built.

A group calling itself the *Animal Liberation Front* firebombed a chicken restaurant in Grandview Woodlands. The restaurant was owned by a Mexican immigrant who had done a lot of positive work in the community. It was the only one in the city that sold free range chicken. The bomb also damaged apartments above the restaurant and an Italian restaurant next door. This action has served to discredit the ALF in the eyes of most Vancouver activists. However, no one has ever heard of the ALF being active in Vancouver before. In light of the recent revelations about infiltration of the animal liberation movement by *agent provocateurs*, this bombing is highly suspicious.

The Skinheads are organizing in Vancouver. There's probably about 20 hard core skins and a growing number of hangers on. They've been passing out fascist, anti-choice, and homophobic literature, and verbally disrupting Left demos. Last Sunday they attacked an International Socialist meeting. There's been an anti-Nazi league formed to combat them but it's got its own problems. It tends to be dominated by macho young male leftists who think the best way to deal with skins is to raid their gigs with baseball bats.

*Red and Green* took over a vacant lot last week and are turning it into a community garden. We've been fairly successful so far in getting neighbourhood involvement. We're going to use the first crop to give out free food at a harvest party in the fall. After that local people will use it to grow food for themselves.

I hope all is well with you folks and that you get enough money sent in to get you out of debt.

Steve Stewart  
Red and Green  
Vancouver, BC

Dear KIO

Thanks for the back issue of KIO, made great reading! Thanks too for the free subscription, it will be well read by many.

The interview with Nineth de Garcia was very disturbing. The scenario for North American *desaparecidos* is ever drawing closer. Here in the States, and especially in Michigan, the government is mass constructing prisons called Control Units. In them, prisoners are isolated from each other, visitors, and the world. Guards are being systematically trained to treat the prisoners as sub-human; recreation is isolation in a 10' by 20' dog kennel; prisoners when out of their cells are led about at the end of dog leashes (some in muzzles), etc.

Guards are taught to ignore the law regarding prisoner treatment, to become inured to the torture they inflict, to snitch on each other for even the slightest show of compassion for a prisoner, etc.

These Control Units have no legitimate penological goal, no programs to rehabilitate are offered and anyone with any sense can see the Control Units aggravate assaults and cause prisoner degeneration.

So I wonder as to their purpose. The public here is told that the places are built and run to house the toughest, meanest types. We prisoners know who among us are truly dangerous and they're not the ones being put in Control Units. Rather they house jailhouse lawyers, political activists and organizers. But we at our best pose no threat so I am lead to assume these prisoners are training fodder for future political detention centres whose use may or may not even come into being.

I'm curious if Canada has begun to build Control Units?

The guards here are ex-military who as guards are armed, uniformed paramilitarists. The government has strengthened the guards (they are unionized) politically and financially so they are now an armed body with an undetermined leadership. Many are ex-cops whose forced firing resulted from the killing and/or torturing of an arrestee.

I look forward to the next issue of KIO. Thanks again to all of you from all of us.

In Solidarity  
James Chipman



George Sanders

Dear KIO,

Bill McCormick's attack on Murray Bookchin and social ecology in the fall 1988 letters column was way off base. While Bookchin may be the most prominent critic of deep ecology, he is not the only one. Unfortunately, the deep ecologists, instead of admitting that there are some serious flaws in their theory that allow for misanthropic interpretations, have responded with ad hominem attacks on Bookchin. Apparently, they figure by discrediting Bookchin that the rest of their critics will either go away or be so confused by all the personal attacks, that the original statements made in the journal *Earth First!* will be forgotten.

McCormick tries to play the old game of divide and conquer against the critics of deep ecology. He brings up the issue of Bookchin's views on the decentralizing potential of modern technology to supposedly "prove" that Bookchin is neither an ecologist nor an anarchist. The issue is basically a red herring, irrelevant to the question of the misanthropic tendencies of deep ecology. However, McCormick's discussion of these issues only demonstrates his ignorance of both ecology and anarchism.

The notion that our ecological problems can be solved by retreating to a hunter-gatherer or some other low tech mode of existence has to be one of the more anti-ecological bits of stupidity coming from the "deep ecologists". Even if you could convince a majority on our planet to adopt such a lifestyle, the strain which this would put on the remaining wilderness areas would bring about complete ecological collapse within a matter of weeks. Consider the situation of many "Third World" countries which are currently being deforested by poor people who use wood for fuel. Imagine what it would be like if they were also looking for things to eat?

Seen in this light, Bookchin's search for decentralized technology, which can feed everyone and sustain the ecology, is both more "deep" and more ecological. Moreover, this particular insight is not unique nor original to Bookchin. Sam Dolgoff in "Modern Technology and Anarchism," which is in *Libertarian Labor Review* #1, also points out the very real possibilities for decentralization inherent in the latest technology. Both Bookchin and Dolgoff are only updating the theories of Peter Kropotkin, which are a century old. Dolgoff's criticism of Bookchin is not over the question of technology, but on the claim that anarchism is only possible in an "affluent" or "post-scarcity" society which Dolgoff feels is too economic determinist.

It is good to see that some deep ecologists are beginning to distance themselves from Dave Foreman, the "James Watt" of deep ecology, and his ilk. However, the deep ecologists should stop muttering about left-wing conspiracies led by Murray Bookchin or some other red menace. It was their attack on so-called "anthropocentrism" and their more bio-than-thou attitude that got them into trouble in the first place. As we all know, the root word for ecology is "oikos", which means house. It is time for the deep ecologists to get their own "oikos" in order.

Jeff Stein  
Champaign, IL



George Sanders

## Winds of Change

In 1981, when *Kick It Over* started, you could fit all the Toronto anarchists into a small living room. That has changed in Toronto, and all over North America. Also, anarchist critiques of the state and of hierarchy have taken root in many different movements, such as the peace movement, the feminist movement, and the ecology movement, to name a few. Moreover, ecology, sexual liberation and concerns of Native people and people of colour have become or are becoming more a part of anarchism itself. More attention is also being paid to the personal dimension of politics, and to process issues. We would like to think we have played some part in this development.

As we come close to the end of the decade, many of us in the collective are feeling tired and burned out from the exertion of putting out a quarterly magazine and are eager to take the KIO spirit to other projects. We are also still struggling with debt (for which all contributions are gratefully accepted). Half of us have decided that we need to rest -- which means that our publishing schedule may become irregular. We are saddened that some of us are leaving, but we feel that this is the best choice. We would like to thank all those who, over the years, have contributed to the magazine -- teaching us layout and computer skills, writing articles and letters, producing art work, distributing, contributing money, and providing encouragement. Without all of these efforts, the magazine would simply not have existed. The remaining members of the collective continue to need this kind of support more than ever.

We all have the same ideals with which we began and feel that they are even more necessary as we head into the 90's. We wish all of you well in the 35 countries where KIO travels, and we continue to work for a green world free of domination.

The KIO Collective